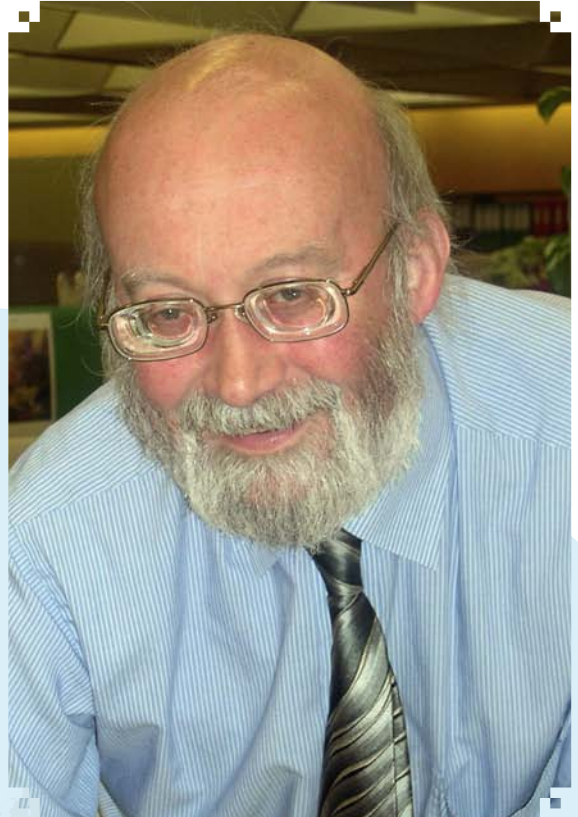


'A LAD O'PAIRTS'

A Day Conference in Memory of

Ian Shepherd

To Celebrate the Wide
Contribution he made to
Scottish Archaeology



Kings College Conference Centre,
Aberdeen University

Saturday 11 December 2010

10am - 5pm

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Ian Shepherd – the Lad o’ Pairs

Lekky Shepherd

This collection of papers is meant both as a tangible remembrance of the conference day and also as a memorial to Ian in itself. He would have been overwhelmed by this day and by the appreciation of all his colleagues and friends. He would have been so thankful that a life which he so thoroughly enjoyed had resulted in such solid rewards and contributions from so many areas.

We have called this conference *A Lad o’ Pairs*, a description Ian liked to confer on those multi-faceted people he most admired. It is not necessarily a label he would have given himself: he would more usually comment—sometimes gleefully, sometimes ruefully—that he had a butterfly mind, skipping to each new enthusiasm as it presented itself. That his butterfly mind settled so comfortably on many of these new

delights, embracing them so fully and to such an effect, is attested by the range of contributions present here.

These papers encompass all facets of Ian’s working life: objects and landscape, excavation and publication, structures and organisations, architecture above and below ground. We start, quite naturally, with Ian’s love of the archaeological fundamentals, the objects, which for his professional life began and ended with his jet button study; this love left him, like others, bemoaning the current neglect of artefact study in the face of the prevailing archaeological vogue for unsubstantiated theory and abstract flimsy: it is sad, then, that he should have missed the *History of the World in 100 Objects*, a sign of a robust redressing of the balance that would have gladdened his heart.

The conference and these pages also incorporate the excavation and discovery that were his joy, especially in the wet and wilds of the far-flung Scottish islands; they cover the field



Grampian Regional Archaeologist on the job



Ian at work in the early days of Grampian

survey which he relished and would pursue in a dogged way, both on the ground and in the air (until what must have been the early affects of his encroaching illness made him happy to pass the latter mantle on to Moira Greig). Here too is his pioneering work as the first regional archaeologist which gave full rein to his love of the detailed and the structured, the cataloguing and organisation which had shown itself in the 15-year-old's slide collection listed under 'Domestic' and 'Castellated'. Here is the publication that he valued so highly and contributed to both as editor and in writing his own flowing prose. And here too the other enthusiasms, always there but increasingly prominent in Ian's later working years: the architecture, the houses, castles and churches and their history.

The only thing that can't be present on this day is the experience of Ian's own lecturing skills; he would be sorry that you are missing that:

he would quite cheerfully confess to liking the sound of his own voice... but in this conference everyone is speaking for him. The lad o' pairs would enjoy listening – nodding or occasionally shaking his head. Having done that, he would very much appreciate adding this slim volume to his shelves and dipping in to it from time to time. We hope his far-flung audience will enjoy doing the same and will remember him as they do so.



Ian at Dalladies, 1971

Common Misconceptions - Life with Ian as a colleague

Moira Greig, Aberdeenshire
Archaeology Service

All speakers at this conference, and indeed many members of the audience, will have their own memories, or conceptions, of Ian Shepherd. However, I am in the unique position of having been his working colleague for over 20 years.

I first met Ian in 1975, the day he came for his successful interview with the new Grampian Regional Council. There was this tall, serious, dark-haired, bearded young man. A polite young man, I thought, but he does not know too much about the archaeology of the area! He didn't take long to rectify that that,

when a year later another young archaeologist called Ian Ralston joined Aberdeen University, and together they started putting the NE of Scotland on the Archaeology map. We all became friends and I would occasionally invite them both round to join my husband, Colvin Greig, and me for meals and a wee dram. Indeed I well remember one birthday in particular, where I was regaled with their rendering of the 'Keil Row', well at least

I assumed it was that, as I heard some of the words, but otherwise the use of 'regale' is a misnomer, as both were tone deaf.

When I joined Local Government in 1986 I felt very privileged to work with someone of Ian's standing in the world of archaeology and felt slightly intimidated. However, I soon found out that there were other sides to this man, a very human and mischievous person, but also a 'darker' side.

I was always interested in flying and knew that Ian undertook archaeological aerial photography, although he was never particularly happy in the air and his eye sight occasionally gave him problems. I started to pester him about letting me go up as well. I think in the end he got a bit fed up with this and one day he suddenly said "OK, you can have a go. Here are the cameras and you'll need maps. Better have your lunch first, as it could be a while before you get back". No further instructions apart from how to change the film in the camera. So off I excitedly went, having had my lunch, clutching my maps and cameras. No one told me what happens when you open the window in a small plane when flying along. I lost a map somewhere over Inverurie and then my lunch over Kintore! When I finally returned to the office Ian looked

at me with a sweet smile and said "My, my, we are looking a little bit green, aren't we? Did you enjoy your first flight, my dear?" Now I would say there was definitely a sadistic side lurking there. I hasten to add that I really took to flying and aerial photography and have rarely been sick since that very first flight.

Now I just happen to be a Fifer, and a farmer's daughter to boot, so this was a never ending source of amusement to Ian, who took great delight in teasing me whenever the opportunity arose (racist?). It stood me in good

stead for site visits, although there was a definite pecking order for site visits. If a land or estate owner phoned in Ian would go on the site visit (elitism?); if it was a farmer I would go. "You can talk their language so much better, my dear" he would say sweetly (bigoted?).

Ian never failed to amaze me with his knowledge and memory of the sites he visited over the years. I could show him a photo that he had taken in the late 1970s and ask where it was.



Team building day 2007

Immediately he would come back with how to get to it, followed by a lengthy description of it, even down to the best place to eat on the way to the site. His retentive memory was phenomenal, with a depth of knowledge on a variety of subjects that sometimes staggered me. I always beat him on farming though!

There was a flaw however, in this great man. He would drive us crazy by leaving a pile of Planning Applications until the very last minute. Bruce & I would receive irate calls from Planners urgently requiring responses, but Ian's motto was "Never do today what you can put off till tomorrow", or for several tomorrows in his case. He would then sit down calmly and sail through them, all in a relatively short time. He also had the ability to multi-task, but the worst addition to his life was his filo-fax. At meetings he could be seen busy flipping through it and jotting things down and people would often think he wasn't really listening, but come a question, or a wrong comment made and Ian would be in there immediately with a correct response (infuriating?).

Ian would always encourage me and back me up if I came up with any ideas for promoting the archaeology of the NE. This included preparing for the Council for Scottish Archaeology's Fair, now Archaeology Scotland. On one occasion he surprised me by saying he would actually come along on the day and help for once. I should have known Ian's 'helping' was not quite my idea of helping. I saw him briefly at the start and then at the end! "Networking" he said. He also knew that if he wanted something done the best way was to say to me he didn't think it could be done. I would then take up the challenge. He would then say "I told you we could do it" and then take the kudos. My one regret is that he never saw the Archaeology map of NE Scotland finished. "We" did it, Ian!

Ian always fancied himself as a bit of a wine connoisseur and always enjoyed a glass or two (or three) at the office Christmas dinners. I always remember one evening in particular when we were aware that Ian was slowly getting smaller, as



Ian note-taking at Miss Piggy's pyre

he gradually slipped under the table. The only thing that stopped him completely disappearing was the table leg. It was also a standing joke in the office that the Bronze Age Studies Group, that Ian was a member of, chose locations not so much for the archaeology but for the wine, because Ian would regale us with tales of the food and wine he had drunk, as well as the wonderful sites he had seen I hasten to add.

In his last few working years Ian became involved with Dr Adam Watson and his colleagues, helping them to look for sites showing evidence of earlier land cultivation through looking at soil podzols. Ian looked forward to these outings immensely and, given that the average age was over 70, we jokingly called them his 'Last of the Summer Wine' outings. However, I have since agreed to carry on some of his work, along with Ian Ralston, and so I have now become the Nora Batty of the group!

Over all the years we worked together we never fell out, although we would have an occasional disagreement. Other colleagues in the office would say we sounded like an old bickering, married couple (sorry Lekky!) – the Darby and Joan of Local Government Archaeologists.

I greatly miss his intellect, his knowledge and his piled-up desk that couldn't be seen under the depth of papers. Most of all I miss the morning greetings of "Well, well if it's not Mrs Greig".

Cremating Miss Piggy: an experimental Bronze Age-style cremation

Alison Sheridan, National Museums Scotland

This contribution, offered in loving memory of the great Ian Shepherd, describes an experimental Bronze Age-style cremation that was both inspired and facilitated by Ian and his wife Lekky, and it is a pleasure to record my gratitude to them here.

In September 2004, at Archaeolink archaeology centre, a six month-old pig, bedecked in a faience bead necklace and dressed in a woven woollen shroud fixed by a bone pin, was cremated with due ceremony on an open pyre. The main purpose of the experiment was to examine what happens to faience beads when they pass through a funerary pyre, although much additional information was obtained as well. The experiment had been inspired by the excavation, in April 1988, of an Early Bronze Age grave that had been discovered during building work at 102 Findhorn, Moray (Shepherd & Shepherd 2001). Initially thought by the householder to be an old chimney, a large ceramic vessel was found, on excavation, to be an inverted large Cordoned Urn which contained the cremated remains of a young adult woman, aged between 18 and 25 years, along with a full-term foetus or neonate. It appears that the woman had died in childbirth. Twenty five faience beads were found in the grave, of which 23 were inside the urn and the remaining two – an incomplete star-shaped bead and a quoit-shaped bead – were found among pyre debris at the top of the pit in which the urn had been placed, along with charcoal, a small chunk of flint and flecks of cremated bone. Great care had been taken to gather up the human remains and artefacts from the pyre, and the presence of

this patch of material at the top of the grave pit, deposited in a small scoop, was interpreted as part of this careful treatment: perhaps the beads had dropped to the bottom of the pyre and had been retrieved after all the other material had been buried.

The Findhorn find constituted (and still constitutes) the largest single discovery of faience – a glazed vitreous material – in Britain and Ireland, and this sparked an entire National Museums Scotland (NMS) research project on the Early Bronze Age faience jewellery of Britain, Ireland and the near Continent led by the author (Sheridan & Shortland 2004; Sheridan *et al* 2005). This project, now nearing its completion, has aimed not only to document all the known examples of this material (which amount to over 350 beads), but also to investigate its proximate origin, date, manufacture and use, taking advantage of the analytical facilities of NMS to undertake compositional and micro-structural analysis. The project has established that faience beads appeared in Britain and Ireland (with the know-how for their manufacture having been learned from central European makers) possibly as early as the 20th century BC. They remained in use until the 15th century BC, with a peak of popularity between 1800 and 1500 BC; the Findhorn example lies within this peak period, with its radiocarbon date (from short-lived species pyre charcoal) of 3410 ± 50 BP (OxA-7622, 1768–1632 cal BC at 1 σ , 1881–1541 cal BC at 2 σ , calibrated using OxCal 4.1). They were made on a small-scale basis, and the Findhorn ones were almost certainly made locally, using burnt seaweed as a fluxing agent to help the constituent crushed sand grains fuse when fired.

Of particular interest was the variable condition of the beads, with the two found at the top of the grave appearing to be in a significantly worse condition than the others. Analysis of these beads revealed that they had indeed suffered considerable heat damage, with their glaze having been burnt off and – in the case of the star-shaped bead – part of the bead having

been lost, and the fracture surfaces rounded by the heat. Some of the other beads, however, appeared to be undamaged, and this stimulated the desire to explore what happens to faience (a glazed vitreous material) when it is worn on the pyre. This led to the Archaeolink experiment.

As a proxy for the young woman, a six-month-old female pig, weighing around 70kg, was procured, along with a ton of wood, constituting a mixture of roundwood and brushwood. Advice on the construction of the pyre was generously provided by Dr Jacqueline McKinley of Wessex Archaeology, the authority on prehistoric cremation practices. A ton of wood equates to the amount of fuel used in modern crematoria to carry out the efficient cremation of a person. It was not necessary to dig a pit as a pyre foundation; by laying the roundwood in alternating rows with spaces in between the logs, this permitted enough air flow to create a roaring pyre.

A faience necklace was made by Dr Andrew Shortland (now of Cranfield University), strung with a sinew thread, and placed around the neck of the pig. No other grave goods had been retrieved from the Findhorn grave; copper staining on some of the bones had probably derived from the copper that had been used as a glaze colourant in the faience beads. Nevertheless, since the experiment offered the opportunity to explore other aspects of Early Bronze Age cremation, other grave goods were added. The pig 'dressed' in a woven woollen shroud, fixed with a straight bone pin, and a bronze awl set in a wooden handle, together with a copper 'dagger', was placed on the pyre. Two unfired clay accessory vessels, one containing beeswax, were also placed on the pyre (along with modern miniature flowerpots, one also containing beeswax). These small vessels are frequently found accompanying cremated remains, and research by Dr Alex



Ian *et al* at Miss Piggy cremation



Miss Piggy pyre ablaze

Gibson (2004) had concluded that they may have been placed, unfired, on the pyre; it seems likely that they had served as chafing vessels, containing glowing embers used to light the pyre. In one or two cases, traces of beeswax had been noted in the pots. Gibson had noted that many of these small, often perforated cups had spalled surfaces, and wondered whether the spalling (probably resulting from using fairly inclusion-free clay) had resulted during the cremation process.

'Miss Piggy', as she became known, was duly carried in on a bier and her pyre was lit at 3pm on a Saturday afternoon inside the replica recumbent stone circle at Archaeolink. The weather was dry, with a light breeze: ideal conditions, with the proceedings being recorded by Bruce Mann. Organic material laced with vegetable oil was used to light the pyre; it was slow to catch, but after 10–15 minutes (during which time it smoked, as the moisture in the wood was driven off) it was fully ablaze and had

reached a temperature of over 1000 degrees Celsius. The pyrometers that had been placed in the pyre recorded that it remained at this temperature for over two hours, and the pyre continued to burn into the evening and through the night. Minimal management of the pyre was needed to ensure that it burned thoroughly. By 3pm the next day, the remains were (just about) cool enough for the bone to be picked out. Ian, Lekky and Moira (Greig) kindly excavated and planned the remains in their characteristically meticulous manner.

The pyre had completely burnt down and the pig had turned to clean white calcined bone and ash, with only a small chunk of incompletely burnt carcass remaining. So efficient was the burning that much of the ash blew away during the cremation: an important observation, given that so many prehistoric deposits of cremated bone appear to be incomplete. The pig's weight had been reduced to under 3kg. The beads behaved exactly as predicted: the thread had burnt away early in the proceedings, and the beads that had dropped off at that point were not as heat-damaged as the ones that remained on the pyre throughout the cremation. The heat damage took the form of conversion of the copper in the glaze to bright red cuprite as the glaze burnt; physical deformation; and also incorporation of fragments of cremated bone into the surface of the beads, as the surface had melted and then re-solidified. The fusing of cremated bone to bead surfaces is a characteristic noted on some faience beads from elsewhere in Britain. Analysis of the beads before and after the cremation has provided much useful information about compositional change (Sheridan *et al* 2005).

The other grave goods had a similarly interesting story to tell. The deer-bone shroud pin, which had been straight, had curved in the pyre, to resemble the curved pins so often found with Early Bronze Age cremated remains. No trace was found of the little bronze awl and its handle, which seemed to have been entirely consumed

in the flames. The copper 'dagger' had only superficial surface alteration; and the accessory vessels, ironically, had fired without any spalling. Analysis of these vessels by Dr Ben Stern correctly identified which one had contained the beeswax.

Miss Piggy herself went on to be of further use to archaeologists. Three radiocarbon laboratories have dated her remains, and have concluded that the cremation process did not involve carbon exchange with the environment, such as might affect the accuracy of the date. Furthermore, examination of the remains by Gail Mackintosh of Glasgow University has produced useful additional information about the degradation of the body in the cremation process.

Acknowledgements

The kind assistance of Ian and Lekky Shepherd, Moira Greig, Bruce Mann and the staff of Archaeolink, especially Jason Hunt and Mark Keighley, is warmly acknowledged. Dr Andrew Shortland is thanked for making the necklace and Dr Kathy Eremin (formerly of NMS) is thanked for analysing the beads before and after cremation. Many other people assisted with the experiment and they, too, are warmly thanked.

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Preparing the pyre



The pyre the day after

Coles's Covesea phase revisited: networks of contact in the Late Bronze Age of North-East Scotland

Trevor Cowie, Department of Archaeology, National Museums Scotland

In his classic paper on Scottish Late Bronze Age metalwork, John Coles attempted to bring the mass of material from the period 'into some order, to divide it regionally and chronologically' (1960, 16). The emphasis was firmly on the metalwork - a reflection of the scarcity of datable settlements, distinctive ceramics and contemporary burial record. This celebration of Ian Shepherd's contribution to Scottish archaeology provides an appropriate opportunity to reflect briefly on one aspect of the Coles scheme which has a special bearing on the north-east of Scotland - his so-called Covesea phase - and to see how it has weathered over the last 50 years.

Briefly, Coles distinguished five phases in the Late Bronze Age (henceforth LBA) settlement of Scotland, which could all be more or less closely correlated with the scheme for the British Bronze Age then recently devised by Professor Christopher Hawkes. Coles named his phases after representative hoards or finds, ranging from the Poldar phase, marking the appearance in Scotland of the first true LBA metalwork types (then seen as occurring some time after the 9th century BC) to a late Tarves phase (around the 6th century BC). Interpreted as overlapping rather than simply successive, and in some cases as developments of a strongly regional character, the various stages marked the process of expansion of Late Bronze metalworking across Scotland.

One of the stages of the Scottish LBA seen as having a particularly strong regional focus,

the Covesea phase was characterised by the appearance in the metalwork record of north-east Scotland of a distinctive range of bronze ornaments - especially exotic looking necklets, best known from a hoard found at Braes of Gight, Aberdeenshire (Muirhead 1891) and also by so-called 'Covesea' type penannular bracelets with outwardly expanded terminals, named after the important site at Sculptor's Cave, Covesea, in Moray (Benton 1931). In view of the apparent strength of their continental parallels, and the rather restricted distribution of these types, the North-east appeared to be set apart from other regions of Scotland. Indeed the Covesea phase was originally seen by Coles as marking 'the arrival in north-east Scotland, from the Tay to the Moray coast, of settlers from the north-west German plain' (Coles 1960, 54). At the time, apparently supported by the evidence from Sculptor's Cave, a range of plain pottery (so-called Flat-Rimmed Ware) was also allied to this supposed movement of people, seen as occurring in the decades around 700 BC (*ibid* 43-4).

By the early 1970s - perhaps because invasions were no longer being seen as an entirely satisfactory explanation for many of the observed cultural changes in British prehistory (cf Clarke 1966) - the case for an actual movement of population seemed unconvincing. In publishing the results of excavation of a midden in the Culbin Sands, Coles and Taylor (1970) readily admitted that Flat-Rimmed pottery did not constitute a diagnostic ceramic tradition and that its seeming association with exotic bronzes at Sculptor's Cave no longer sustained interpretation in terms of an immigrant population. Nevertheless, on the strength of what was still seen as a phase of *imported* metalwork, the North-east continued to be marked out as a region with strong continental connections.

In his detailed review of the evidence for contacts between Britain and the near Continent during the later Bronze Age, Brendan O'Connor noted that penannular bracelets were popular



The Glentanar hoard

throughout central, western and northern Europe towards the end of the Bronze Age and that precise comparisons for the so-called 'Covesea' bracelets could not be sustained – at least no longer in the specific terms advanced by Coles (1980, 212-3). In the case of the necklets, O'Connor drew attention to parallels in SE France, weakening the argument for supposedly direct connections with northern Germany (*ibid*, 377-8). Instead it became possible to explain the bracelets and necklets, along with other ornament types such as hair rings and amber beads, simply as a native reflection of the adoption of ideas and fashions culled from near-continental and Irish sources.

The case for seeing some of the bronze ornament types as direct imports was finally undermined by a programme of analyses which showed that the supposedly exotic artefacts had metal compositions typical of much Scottish LBA metalwork (Cowie *et al* 1998). The North-east seems to have been part of a wider metal supply zone extending down much of eastern Britain, and there seems no reason to doubt local production - a likelihood reinforced by the recent discovery of clay moulds for manufacture of bracelets or bangles during excavations at Birnie, near Elgin (Hunter 2007, 29-30). Conversely,

while not precluding the possibility of more local manufacture, the relatively few gold ornaments from the region tend to point westwards to Irish connections (cf Clarke & Kemp 1981, O'Connor & Shepherd forthcoming).

Just as the interpretation of the possible sources and nature of the contacts has modified, so too has the chronology (cf Needham *et al* 1998; Rohl & Needham 1998). The available determinations for Scottish metalwork continue to indicate relatively close alignment with the wider British sequence - and consequently the need for radical revision of most aspects of Coles' original LBA scheme. The range

of distinctive metalwork associated with the Covesea phase (and indeed also the material once assigned to Coles's, supposedly late, Tarves phase) may now be seen as characteristic of the Ewart metalworking stage with a broad date span from c 1000–800 BC (following the nomenclature proposed by Rohl & Needham 1998, 105-6).

In summary, much of the framework for the Scottish LBA proposed by Coles has been dismantled, and his timetables revised beyond recognition; nevertheless, his recognition of the importance and 'otherness' of the North-east remains valid. Even if seen as local interpretations of internationally known fashions, the broad north-east knuckle of Scotland, from Fife to the Moray Firth, appears to have figured in a widespread, if diffuse, network of contacts linking areas as far afield as Ireland, France and Northern Europe. Where geography or resources were favourable, involvement in these networks offered a route to enrichment for the region's elites.

The type-site for the Covesea phase, the Sculptor's Cave, on the Moray coast, was first investigated between 1928 and 1930 by Miss Sylvia Benton who recovered evidence of LBA

and Roman Iron Age activity (Benton 1931). In the course of their rescue excavations at the Cave in 1979, Ian and Lekky Shepherd were able to tease out further details from the deposits left untouched by its original excavator; in particular they were able to clarify the nature of the LBA deposits, add to the inventory of finds, and above all to draw out the previously understated evidence for the disposal of human remains in the cave (Shepherd 1995; Shepherd 2007). More recent research on the human remains from Sculptor's Cave has continued to shed fascinating light on the complex history of use of this defiantly enigmatic site, with radiocarbon dating confirming its intensive use during the LBA and forensic analysis bearing out Ian's suggestion that human heads may have been displayed at the cave entrance at this time (Schulting *et al* 2010; Armit *et al* forthcoming).

In particular, Ian was able to set the site and the associated metalwork finds in the context of a wider European tradition of use of caves as ossuaries during the later Bronze Age, drawing parallels with such sites as Heathery Burn Cave, County Durham (Greenwell 1894) or the awe-inspiring Trou de Han in the Belgian Ardennes (Warmenbol 1993), which he had visited in the

course of a memorable meeting of the Bronze Age Studies Group in 1992.

Indeed, touching directly on issues relating to the spread and adoption of new ideas, technologies and beliefs, Covesea and its associated cultural package are especially germane to this occasion not only because of Ian's direct involvement with Sculptor's Cave as excavator but also because of his awareness, throughout his career, of Scotland's place in its wider, European setting. That awareness was reinforced by his enthusiastic membership of the BASG. Through the contacts and friendships forged there, perhaps over the occasional 'G & T' or glass of tolerably decent wine, he was able to promote the prehistoric archaeology of Scotland to an international audience and conversely was able to apply the insights gained from its annual meetings to his research and publications – most notably to his own interpretations of that remarkable cave.

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A view of the interior of the Sculptor's Cave, Covesea, during the 1979 excavation. In the foreground, is the impressive interior of the cave, excavated by Miss Benton from 1928-1930. In the background can be seen the twin entrance passages which contained the surviving archaeological deposits. © Historic Scotland; photo: Ian Shepherd



View of the Sculptor's Cave, Covesea (© Janet Trythall)

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A Sunset Song? The Beaker to Food Vessel transition in Northern Britain (circa 2200/2150 -1800 cal BC)

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'A new generation comes up that will know them not, except as a memory in a song, they pass with the things that seemed good to them...'
(Grassic Gibbon [1932] 2007, 260)

Introduction

In autumn 1984, Ian Shepherd undertook an excavation at Beatties Hill, Stonehaven, after two Early Bronze Age short-cist burials were uncovered (I Shepherd 1985, 18). The two cists were similar to those carefully recorded by Ian and his colleagues over the course of 30 years (Grampian Regional Council 1987). However, several key differences were apparent: they were orientated N-S rather than the E-W direction so typical of Aberdeenshire. Moreover, the surviving ceramics were not Beakers but Food Vessels: with their thicker fabric and different range of decorative techniques, motifs and associations (Simpson 1968). Some years later, the Leverhulme Trust funded Beakers and Bodies Project (co-led by Ian) dated cist 1 to 2140-1955 cal BC at 95% probability (3673 ± 29 BP; OxA-V-2243-50) and thus towards the end of the Beaker period in the region – possibly within memory's reach – and probably contemporary with the Beaker burials that continued until relatively late in other regions, such as Angus (eg see Needham 2005, 206, fig 13).

How should we understand the Food Vessel burials such as Beatties Hill? They may represent a subtle but socially meaningful change, in conscious contrast with earlier, Beaker practices (cf Corded Ware and Bell Beaker groups in Continental Europe: inter alia Vander Linden

2003). Alternatively, they may represent an unconscious shift through 'hybrid' vessels accommodating traits recognisable from both traditions (eg I Shepherd's Step 7: 1986, illus 19-20). To address these questions we can review the regional, social and 'historical' contexts of these traditions. Indeed, a contextual approach provides the basis on which to re-evaluate the relationship between Beakers and Food Vessels (Table 1). These strands are reviewed in the turn, below, before being considered together in the concluding remarks.

The chronology of Beakers and Food Vessels

It seems likely that Beaker burials continued to be made at least into the 21st century cal BC (Needham 2005, 195-8), and therefore overlapped with Food Vessels, albeit potentially only narrowly and in regionally specific ways (Wilkin forthcoming).

The plentiful dates for Irish Food Vessels are also instructive (Brindley 2007). These suggest a date range of c 2200-1830 cal BC for Bowls, followed by Vases c 2100-1800 cal BC. Furthermore, there are now c 30 high quality dates for Food Vessel burials in Northern Britain. These appear to be consistent with Vases, while the date and character of Irish Bowl burials suggests they served as the Irish 'version' of their Beaker counterparts (Carlin & Brück forthcoming). Indeed, it is notable that the Irish Food Vessels are decoratively elaborate while their English/Scottish counterparts often possess a decorative austerity. The contrast may have been intentional: representing a conscious break from (rather than an alternative to) highly decorated Beakers in regions where they had been prominent.

The origins of the Food Vessel tradition were, therefore, seemingly two-pronged: developing in Ireland and (slightly later and with different connotations) in Northern Britain.

Patterns of orientation and posture

A strong gender dichotomy in the body orientation posture of Beaker (and earlier, Corded Ware) burials has been recognised across Europe (eg Tuckwell 1975; AN Shepherd 1989; forthcoming).¹ For Food Vessel burials, orientation and posture appears to be far less consistent and deviate from the gender dichotomy of Beaker practices (Tuckwell 1975, 102-105). For example, in Fife only c 35% of Food Vessel burials are orientated E-W or NE-SW, with N-S and NW-SE the most common directions



(Wilkin 2009, Appendix 2); with imaginative, symmetrical arrangements of cists at some cemeteries (ibid, Ch 2).

Furthermore, it is clear that a break was made with the ideal duality of adult males:females in the Beaker tradition. The number of children buried with Food Vessels is notably high (cf Garwood 2007, 70-72, figs 7.2, 7.4). Furthermore, Food Vessel burial sees the wider adoption of cremation, which of course was a marked departure from carefully arranged inhumations. It is, however, notable that cremation was

more commonly practiced in regions with no long-term tradition of Beaker burial (eg Wales: in almost all Food Vessel burials and the Peak District: in c 50% of cases) (personal dataset, preliminary analysis). Similarities and differences can therefore be identified but they are regionally specific.

Shared cemeteries and typo-chronology

A small number of cemeteries in Yorkshire have produced both Beaker and Food Vessel burials.² The available stratigraphic data suggests Beaker burials were deposited first (eg Garton Slack 75: Mortimer 1905, 223, fig 569; Rudston 62: Harrison 1980, 88-9, fig 62-3). Three barrows from Yorkshire (Folkton 242; Ganton 21 and Rudston 62) produced very similar Food Vessels and Long-Necked Beakers.³ Both Beaker and Food Vessel burials at Folkton 242 and Ganton 21 followed similar (Beaker inspired) patterns of orientation and posture (Tuckwell 1975, 106). Given the relatively late dates for some Beakers (Needham 2005, fig 13), these sites appear to indicate a chronological hiatus or a socially-/religiously-inspired separation rather than a product of chronology.

Meanwhile, among the shared cemeteries of East-Central Scotland, Beakers lack the careful decoration and form of earlier vessels and instead appear to reference, rather than fully embody, the Beaker tradition. Food Vessels demonstrate Irish influences as well as their own Northern British character (eg Barns Farm, Dalgety: Shepherd in Watkins 1982, 99-119). Other grave-goods include 'jet' ornaments and bronze knife-daggers. Thus, similarities and differences between individuals were expressed in relatively imaginative and flexible ways (cf Jones 2007, 141-61), referencing

an impressive range of geographical and historical 'touchstones, seemingly at once. This represents an important break from the 'normative' and exclusive character of Beaker burial. It is perhaps notable that communities in East-Central Scotland could come to view Beakers in a flexible fashion, as they had no long-term association with the tradition. In sum, overlap between the traditions at cemeteries is relatively rare and regionally particular when it does occur. This may be the result of chronology. However, there is also scope for interpreting loyalty to the old (Beaker ways) in some regions and of communities more willing to make use of references to both traditions among other, less historically encumbered, communities.

Regional sequences and legacies

As noted above, not all regions adopted the same funerary traditions or experienced them in the same chronological sequence. The Peak District seemingly adopted Beaker burial only relatively late.⁴ This burst of activity contrasts with other regions, such as Yorkshire, where several generations (perhaps a century) of Beaker burial practice was followed by the adoption of dagger, 'jet' ornaments and Food Vessel funerary traditions (Manby *et al* 2003, 37, Table 4). Other regions, such as Aberdeenshire, did not adopt Food Vessels in any significant numbers (Curtis & Wilkin forthcoming). Food Vessels were therefore received in different ways and no doubt took on different significance based on this background 'history'. While these regional narratives may be influenced by the long-term cosmological principles held by communities (*ibid*), the geographical mobility of communities to and from regions such as the Yorkshire Wolds (revealed through recent stable isotope analysis) should provide a useful mechanism in future explanations of why and when changes in funerary practices took place (M Parker Pearson pers comm).⁵

Concluding remarks

Having reviewed the various strands of evidence, it is now possible to pull them together and offer some thoughts on the social significance of the Beaker – Food Vessel transition.

Stuart Needham has recently argued that:

'[T]he collapse of Grooved Ware culture around the 22nd century BC and the simultaneous flowering of Beaker culture...led to the formulation of a new set of ideals and cultural goods (among them Food Vessels) by the rump of indigenous society which may have felt itself to have been marginalised or relegated in social terms.' (Needham 2007, 44)

This scenario seems more likely in some regions than others. For instance, the rise of single burial in East-Central Scotland and Kilmartin, Mid-Argyll, may be understood as communities 'cashing-in' in on a revitalised network of social connections and associated commodities (copper, jet ornaments and fancy ceramics) (Sheridan 2008, 257-8), which had been closed off to them during the earlier, fully Beaker era. Unsurprisingly, regions without a strong history of the Beaker tradition appear to have been freer from its influence. Thus, if we are to find conflicts/contrasts between the traditions, they are more likely to occur inter-regionally rather than intra-regionally: between communities with a sense of regional identity mediated (rather than entirely defined) by funerary traditions.

If the success and spread of the Beaker 'network' was predicated on social alliances underpinned by normative ritual prescriptions, then subsequent changes in trade/exchange, mobility and marriage may have had far reaching consequences. Brodie (2001, 495) postulates that the introduction of weaving/textiles may have replaced Beakers as a 'technology of personal expression and identity' across Early Bronze Age Europe. In this context it is notable that twisted cord and perhaps the relatively austere motifs of Food Vessels were a response to more vivid patterning in other contexts – other, more

vibrant but temporary, expressive objects may have become available. However, we should also note that changes in networks of contact and distribution directly associated with early bronze metalworking had the potential to

connect regions, people and ideas in new ways, independent of the Beaker network. Food Vessel burials may be one product of these realignments of cultural contacts.

Ceramic features	Key features shared by Beakers and Food Vessels	Key features unique to Beakers	Key features unique to Food Vessels
Form and fabric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Height and rim diameter usually <20cm - 'hybrid' vessels share thicker walls, rims and presence of applied features(e.g. handles) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Height regularly > rim diameter - Relatively thin walls and rim - Relatively high neck:body (height) ratio - Relatively sinuous profiles with rounded belly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rim diameter regularly ≥ height - Relatively thick walls and rim, often moulded, bevelled and decorated - Considerable range of profiles - Applied features: stops, feet, lids - Deep grooves/cavetto zones
Decorative techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Twisted cord shared by All Over Corded Beakers and some Food Vessels - 'hybrid' vessels share incised decoration and absence of comb impression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comb impression dominates majority of vessels - Linear decorative zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combination of techniques: impression (cord or stick/bone, incision)
Decorative motifs and schema	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complex linear zonation, regularly on Beakers, occasionally on Food Vessels - Bar chevrons on 'late' (Long-Necked) Beakers and Irish Bowl influenced vessels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Various, sometimes highly decorative motifs (see Clarke 1970, 424-28) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All over application of single decorative motif common - False relief motif - Herringbone motif - Horseshoe motif
Chronology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overlapping chronology c.2200/2150-1900 BC, with more of an overlap in regions with Long Necked and 'late'(e.g. Step 7) Beakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chronology: c. 2500/2400-2000/1900 BC, with early and mid Beakers (e.g. Tall Short-Necked) vessels unlikely to overlap with Food Vessels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chronology: c. 2200/2100-1900/1800 BC, with burials after c.2000 BC likely to overlap with Collared Urns
Funerary context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With 'single' burials within graves or cists beneath barrow mounds and cairns - Late Beakers and Food Vessels from the same cemeteries/barrows - Associations: artefacts of bronze (armlets and dagger blades); jet (necklaces and V-perforated buttons); stone battle axes; flint tools (including knives and 'daggers') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Almost exclusively with inhumation burials - Strong tendency towards uniform body posture and grave orientation at inter- and intra-regional scales - Often stratigraphically earlier than Food Vessels - Associations: goldwork (discs, basket 'earrings', ?lunulae); coherent and recurrent archery package (Needham's 'primary package': wristguards, tanged daggers, bone belt rings, barbed-and-tanged arrowheads) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With inhumation and cremation burials - Absence of clear 'rules' governing body posture and grave orientation at inter- and intra-regional scales - Often stratigraphically later than Beakers - Often found in direct or indirect association with other Early Bronze Age ceramics (Collared, Cordoned and Food Vessel Urns)

Table 1: The similarities, differences and overlap between Beakers and Food Vessel burials

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¹ With males on their left-hand side, heads to the east, females on their right-hand side, head to the west or south west, with both genders facing in a southerly direction, A Shepherd's LESM/RWSF pattern .

² Only c 9% of barrows of a sample of 67 in Yorkshire.

³ All three Food Vessels had relatively wide cavetto zones, without stops/lugs, modestly decorated with short lengths of whipped cord.

⁴ For example, with many, similarly decorated, Long-Necked Beakers (see Clarke 1970, no 115-54).

⁵ In this respect, the results of stable isotope analysis for mobility undertaken by the *Beaker Isotope Project* (University of Sheffield) are keenly anticipated.

'A Very Worthwhile, Even Historic Occasion': the Early ARIA & ALGAO

Carol Swanson, West of Scotland Archaeology Service

'A very worthwhile, even historic occasion' had been the conclusion of the first meeting of the embryonic Association of Regional and Island Archaeologists (ARIA) which took place at the Royal Museum, Edinburgh on 20 October 1989. The participants were:

John Dent, Borders Regional Council

Robert Gourlay, Highland Regional Council

Lorna Main, Central Regional Council

Jane Page, Dumfries and Galloway Regional Council

Ian Shepherd, Grampian Regional Council

Carol Swanson, Strathclyde Regional Council

Val Turner, Shetland Amenity Trust

Peter Yeoman, Fife Regional Council

Four of these participants still work in local government archaeology, two have moved on, and two have sadly died. The decision to hold the meeting was taken because it was felt that there was at last the necessary critical mass to form such an Association. Planning policy for archaeology still did not exist – it did not finally arrive until 1994 - but there had been a major step forward in 1988 with the Forestry Commission agreement to accept archaeological advice on Woodland Grant Scheme proposals from local government archaeologists.

Since that early beginning in which Ian Shepherd played a major part – he was the first elected Chair of ARIA – there has been very slow, but steady progress in the extension of the local government curatorial archaeological service in Scotland. Staff numbers are now about

25 in total, but more importantly, complete coverage of all Scottish Councils by some form of curatorial archaeology service was finally achieved in 2008. The process had begun as early as 1974, so it took 34 years to get to that objective. In that time there has been much change. The Regional Councils disappeared to be replaced by unitary Councils. There are no longer so many sole curatorial archaeologists, but there are instead services with several staff in many areas. Some Council archaeologists remain directly employed by Councils, others find themselves in a shared service, or provide advice to neighbouring Councils, or work for Trusts with a service level agreement with the local Council. There is even commercial provision of curatorial advice to three Councils. This is a very different context to that within which ARIA was formed in 1989, but the key achievement remains that there is finally 100% curatorial archaeological coverage in local government in Scotland after years of striving for it.

The Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) is the primary business tool of any curatorial archaeological service in local government. There have been major developments in SMRs over the intervening years. The Sites and Monuments Record Forum, involving all of the SMRs, Historic Scotland, RCAHMS, and others, was created in 2000, and is still in existence today. A Statement of Co-Operation between the SMRs and the RCAHMS was agreed in 2003. Modern SMRs bear no resemblance to the early card indexes and paper maps of old. Most are now GIS-based interactive databases, incorporating photographic material, archaeology reports, historic maps, and many other source materials, linked in many cases to full conservation and management information for each record. Many SMRs are now accessible online either directly, or via Pastmap. The next step is to turn the familiar Sites and Monuments Records, which many of the SMRs in essence still are, to the more comprehensive Historic Environment Records incorporating a full

range of historic environment data. That next generation of HERs will take some time (and funds) to achieve.

At the same time as the growth in local government curatorial archaeological services, the commercial archaeological sector grew alongside. Local government curator and commercial archaeological contractor are two sides of the same coin. In Scotland the two sides are largely separate sectors, so that there is no conflict of interest, leading to the need for Chinese Walls as has been in the case in parts of England. The growth of both sectors was driven by the development of central government policy for the protection of archaeology, led by Historic Scotland, which since 1994 has made the need to consider archaeological issues

an integral part of development planning. Without the existence of the local government archaeologists, who provide the information base and local interpretation of national and local policies, the commercial archaeological sector would have found it much more difficult to grow in the way that it has. It may seem unthinkable now that there was a time when the modern world of commercial contract archaeology did not exist, but it is not actually that long ago, 15 years, since archaeology was routinely being destroyed without record.

Throughout the 1990s and the early 21st century ARIA played a significant role in liaising with Historic Scotland, the RCAHMS, Forestry Commission, the then SEERAD, as well as the then Council for Scottish Archaeology and



A Medieval track under excavation by Addyman Associates at Dreghorn in North Ayrshire. Copyright WoSAS

many others. It was instrumental in negotiating local government archaeological involvement in the provision of advice to the agricultural sector (the Countryside Premium Scheme and the later Rural Stewardship Scheme), in drawing up a code of archaeological practice for Scottish Water operations, and in commenting on all manner of draft guidance and policies, including National Planning Policy Guideline (NPPG) 5 and Planning Advice Note 42. As some ARIA members were already, even before the advent of NPPG 5, advising on the treatment of archaeological remains affected by planning applications, their experience was significant in the final shape of this important planning guidance, now superseded by Scottish Planning Policy (SPP).

Eventually ARIA voted to become ALGAO: Scotland on 21 November 2006, a part of the newly formed ALGAO: UK. The decision was taken because there was recognised to be many areas of common interests which a UK wide organisation could successfully pursue, despite

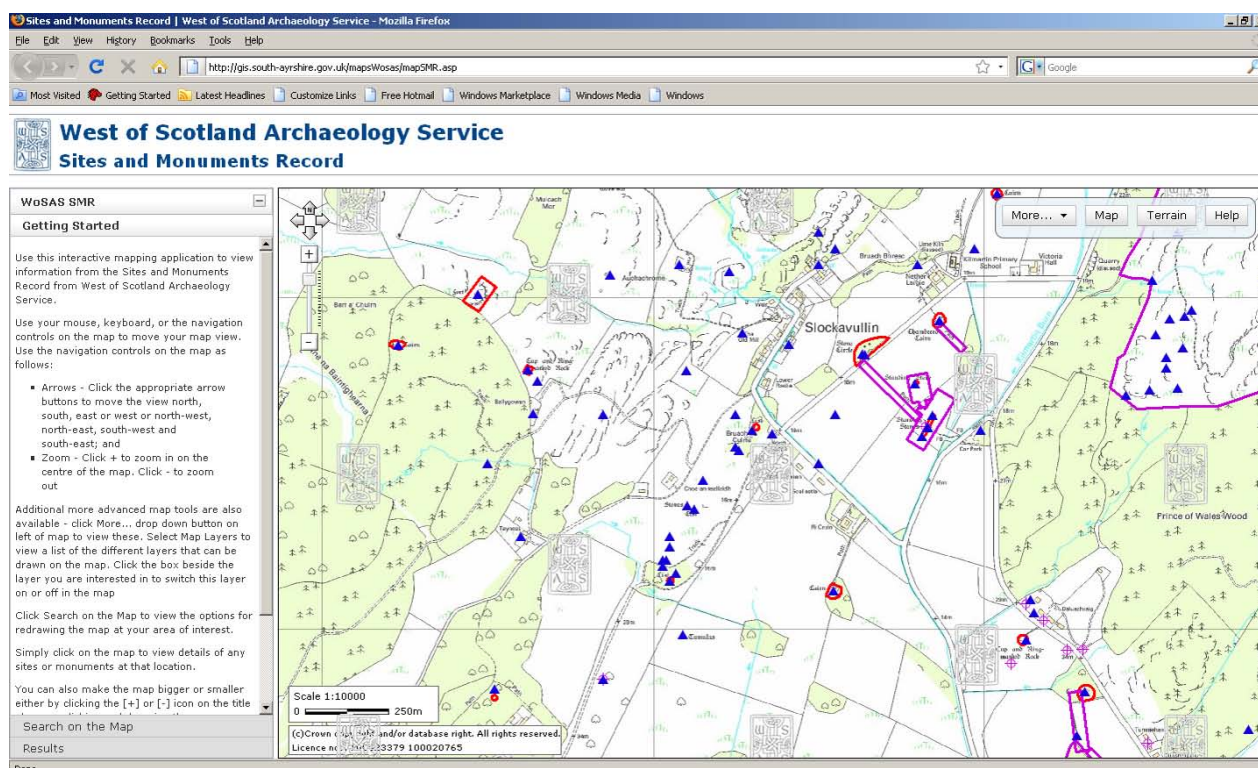
the existence of the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales. Some of the current common interests are:

Trying to ensure that archaeological considerations are built into all new policies and guidance at both central and local governmental level.

Seeking statutory status for Sites and Monuments Records, or the new breed of Historic Environment Records, as a means of lifting standards and stabilising the local government archaeological services, for a record without accompanying advice is of little value.

Seeking to maintain the current coverage of curatorial archaeological services to hold on to what has been achieved throughout the UK.

The last issue is fast becoming a major consideration in all parts of the UK because of the anticipated public sector cuts. We are already starting to see the effects in some parts of England and it is only a question of time until effects are seen more generally, including Scotland. In Scotland a third attempt is being



The online WoSAS SMR. Copyright WoSAS

made to try to get statutory status for Sites and Monuments Record (or Historic Environment Record) Services via the Historic Environment Amendment Scotland Bill currently in the Scottish Parliament. Previous attempts to achieve statutory status both north and south of the border have all failed. The current attempt in Scotland is being led by the Built Environment Forum for Scotland, but is being opposed by Historic Scotland and COSLA, who prefer a policy and persuasion approach to a legislative one. It remains to be seen whether this latest attempt to achieve statutory status for Sites and Monuments Record services will be successful.

The current local government archaeology service in Scotland with its 100% coverage is part of Ian Shepherd's legacy to the future, both through his own work as a local government curatorial archaeologist, and through his active involvement with both ARIA and ALGAO. In 2010 the question to be asked is can this legacy be maintained within the context of the coming public sector funding cuts? There are many challenges, few opportunities, and time is very

limited. It took 34 years to get to the comfortable position we know today, but it could potentially take only the next 3 years to dismantle it!

Gazing into the crystal ball tells us that, although it is highly unlikely that the local government curatorial archaeology service will disappear altogether in Scotland, it will be changed by the public sector cuts. There is a high risk of gaps in coverage opening up and there will certainly be fewer staff as vacancies are not filled by Councils, or redundancies occur. There is a risk of returning to the pre-NPPG 5 scenario of damage to archaeology without record in some areas of Scotland, as surviving curatorial services prioritise and Councils make do with a minimal service or no service at all. This in turn will have an effect on the viability of some parts of the commercial archaeological sector, already struggling with the effects of the recession. All of us may have to work very hard to defend Ian's local government curatorial archaeology legacy by taking every opportunity to raise the issue and to lobby for the protection of what has already been achieved.

'Home-grown' aerial survey for archaeology in Scotland

Dave Cowley, RCAHMS

Aerial reconnaissance for archaeology in Scotland has a long history, with pioneering flights by OGS Crawford in the 1930s, and after World War II an annual programme of survey by J K St Joseph of Cambridge University. This work had a dramatic impact on knowledge of the archaeology of Scotland, especially for the Roman period. However, it was not until the mid 1970s that Scotland developed a 'home-grown' aerial survey capacity, with the RCAHMS unit established in 1976 following 'proofing' flights in 1975, and 'independent/regional' fliers taking to the skies with the support of SDD. Ian Shepherd was an enthusiastic advocate of aerial survey, both in the flying itself – establishing, with Ian Ralston, Aberdeen Aerial Surveys – and in the application and interpretation of results. In reviewing the origins of 'home-grown' aerial survey in Scotland, this paper will outline Ian Shepherd's contribution, identifying its legacy and the challenges this material still holds.

Taking to the skies

It is no exaggeration to say that the application of aerial reconnaissance and of aerial imagery to archaeology has revolutionised many aspects of knowledge. The foremost example is the survey of plough-levelled lowland areas. Here airborne prospection remains the only effective means of discovering and recording sites and monuments that have long been hidden beneath the ploughsoil. Differential vegetation growth – or cropmarking – has revealed to airborne archaeologists at least 9000 otherwise completely invisible sites, placed on record due to a combination of appropriate weather, cropping, soils and the presence, in the air, of a curious observer.

In 2010 aerial photographs are readily available, a very different situation to the mid 1970s, when



accessibility was poor to the point of being virtually non-existent. Against this background the importance of getting airborne and taking photographs cannot be underestimated, especially as 1976-78 proved historically to have been excellent or better-than-average years for the formation of cropmarking. With the establishment of first RCAHMS aerial survey and then Aberdeen Aerial Surveys (AAS) in 1977, a process was set in train that continues to this day – that of recording archaeological sites and monuments from the air, many for the first time. AAS, established by the Council in collaboration with Ian Ralston, then of Aberdeen University, quickly developed a central role in the exploration of the north-east. Previously unknown sites were discovered and put on record while known monuments and landscapes were documented, taking the process from primary survey, through record creation and contributing to the baseline from which our past is understood and managed. In taking to the skies Shepherd and Ralston established a highly successful regional aerial survey built on local expertise and knowledge that continues to this day, having been taken over by Moira Greig in 1992.

Making sense of the past

While aerial reconnaissance has continued apace in Scotland since 1976, the detailed analysis of its products has, by comparison been somewhat neglected, with a few notable exceptions (e.g. Pollock, Macinnes, Roman material, Angus field school, a few PhDs). The sustained focus on reconnaissance is understandable where a 'new'

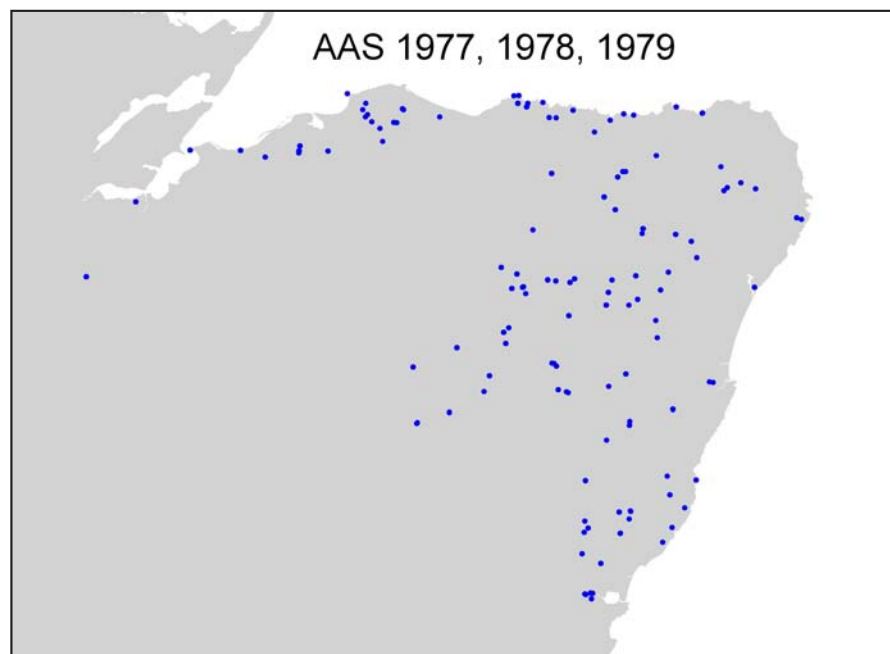
technique is providing stunning results, and where interpretative frameworks are slow to emerge. However, this imbalance has created a significant problem in bringing order to the mass of material created through reconnaissance. This can be illustrated through the proliferation of ambiguous classifications, such as 'cropmark', 'enclosure' and 'ring-ditch', in describing sites. A potpourri of morphological, functional and descriptive classifications have been applied, creating a record from which it is difficult to extract potentially similar sites, and so integrate this important body of material into local, regional or national narratives of the past.

This is an issue that vexed the archaeological community in Scotland from the inception of aerial survey and is rehearsed in the Scottish Archaeological Review from 1983 (vol 2, pt 1). Ralston and Shepherd contributed to this debate with what I believe was a far-sighted system of classification based in the first instance on basic features such as shape, dimensions, proportions, location and so forth, from which groupings could be sought for classification at further levels including functional or cultural as the evidence allowed. Though never applied, and so untested, there is no doubt in my mind that the application of such a scheme, driven from the basic morphology of observed features, rather than structured by interpretative, subjective and changeable nomenclature (e.g. 'homestead', 'fort', 'settlement', 'defended settlement') would create a dataset that could be interrogated and structured for research and so better inform our understanding and management of the

past. Ironically, today the sheer mass of the dataset is a major impediment to the ordering of this material. These issues can be illustrated throughout the holdings of the RCAHMS Canmore database, and remain a problem for myself as a researcher, a telling testament to the foresight of the proposed Aberdeen scheme.

Challenging the future

Ian Shepherd helped establish aerial survey for archaeology in Scotland, creating a survey programme that is in its third decade, has recorded many sites and played a key role in progressing both regional and national survey agendas. In creating data, he also struggled with the issues of understanding it to make it more accessible and useful for researchers and managers. And therein lies the legacy – not in finishing something, but in kick-starting a process that remains a challenge to this day – to effectively record and understand the past.



The distribution of Aberdeen Aerial Surveys sites photographed between 1977 and 1979 in the north-east as recorded in the RCAHMS database. Though not comprehensive, this distribution shows the extensive recording of sites in the early years of survey, many for the first time.

‘Modern stuff’: preparations for the defence of Scotland, 1940

Gordon J Barclay

Abstract

In the summer of 1940 the bank of the Cowie Water in Kincardineshire, west of Stonehaven, was turned into a tank obstacle with roadblocks and pillboxes (Barclay 2005). This paper describes this defensive complex as part of the wider efforts to defend Scotland from a seemingly inevitable German invasion – ‘Operation Sealion’.

Introduction

In the late 1980s Ian Shepherd opened the way for a major change of direction in my research interests, from the Neolithic to the defences erected in the Second World War. I had been aware of the granite pillboxes at Bridge of Dye, in western Kincardineshire, as I drove past them every time I visited my parents in Banchory. Ian was interested in every aspect of Grampian’s past and he raised with me the subject of protecting the remains through scheduling them, as the area Inspector of Ancient Monuments for the region.

At about the same time the Forestry Commission district manager for Kincardineshire, Graham Tuley, mentioned to Ian that there were, in the state forests, vertical banks revetted by timbers held in place by galvanised wire and that these seemed to be of Second World War date. Indeed, it turned out that Graham’s father had been a member of one of the Pioneer companies that had built what we came to realise was an anti-tank stop line, known as the Cowie Line. Some of the key features of the defences were scheduled as ancient monuments between 1996 and 2000 but my curiosity had been aroused and there came a point when I wanted to find out more about the Cowie Line.

1940

In the summer of 1940 Germany occupied the entire coast of mainland Europe facing Britain (Collier 1957, 129). The diary of General Sir Alan Brooke, commander of Home Forces after 20 July, shows how certain an invasion was felt to be in military circles, particularly through September, when his diary is punctuated with entries like: ‘Another day without invasion’ [18 September], ‘Still no invasion!’ [23 September]. Only with the coming of winter did the fear of seaborne (but not airborne) invasion recede (TNA WO166/552); it was only when it became clear in the autumn of 1941 that the Soviet Union was not going to be defeated quickly, that full-scale invasion (as opposed to raiding) became unlikely. With hindsight we can see that the Germans were never going to achieve the necessary control of the sea and air to land and supply an adequate force. However, in 1940 the image of Nazi Germany was one of supreme capability and efficiency; as the Ministry of Information’s regional officers noted, ‘The legend of Hitler’s “invincibility” is a continuous factor in popular psychology’ (Addison & Crang 2010, 239: report for 17 July 1940). Surely, it was felt, the Germans, having defeated France so quickly, must have a plan ready to invade Britain? The main blow was expected on the south coast of England or East Anglia but Scotland was considered vulnerable to diversionary attacks from Norway, in particular on the fleet bases at Scapa Flow, Invergordon and Rosyth. Before the allied fiasco at Dieppe in 1942 proved otherwise, it was believed that a successful invasion could be launched through a captured seaport; and more probably, given the experience of Crete in 1941 (Stewart 1991), that a substantial force could be landed through a captured airfield. As a consequence, places where a port, one or more aerodromes, and a beach suitable for landing lay close together were seen as particularly vulnerable, for example, Wick, Scrabster, Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Aberdeen, Montrose, Arbroath, Dundee, Rosyth and Kirkcaldy.

Static defence

In the period May to July, while General Ironside was in command of Home Defence, the emphasis was on the construction of static defences on the coast and inland. The inland 'stop lines' were intended, as Ironside put it to: 'prevent the enemy from running riot and tearing the guts out of the country as had happened in France and Belgium' (Collier 1957, 129) and to hold them up while limited and (post-Dunkirk) inadequately-equipped mobile reserves were gathered for a counter-attack.

The Cowie Line was one of 11 'stop lines' planned in mainland Scotland in July 1940, from the Strath of Kildonan in the north, to the Forth/Callander line in the south (TNA WO166/115). A northward extension of the GHQ line up the eastern side of England, to the Forth, was reconnoitred but little seems to have been built (TNA WO199/55). Shetland and Orkney, which were effectively military bases, had internal stop lines too. Even after Alan Brooke took command, with a greater emphasis on mobility of defence, construction of the coastal defences and stop lines continued (eg at Tentsmuir in Fife (PISM A.VI.1/61).

The Cowie Line

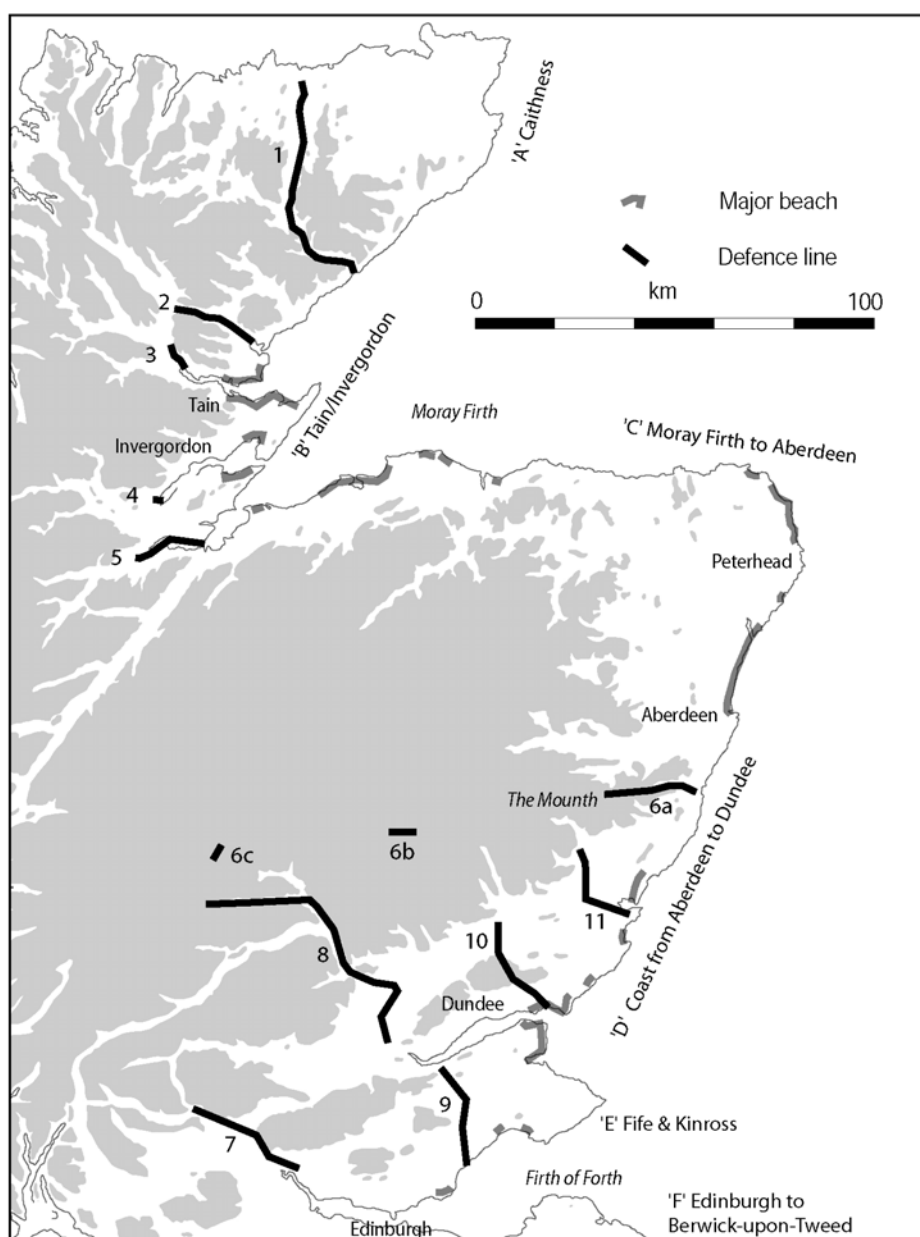
The topography of north-east of Scotland was not considered likely to provide strong lines of defence to stop enemy troops who had landed along the vulnerable beaches or through a port or airfield (TNA WO166/115). The Cowie Line was therefore intended to seal off the region from the areas to the south, where the hills approach the sea, at the Mounth.

The main part of the Line was an anti-tank barrier formed by the south bank of the Cowie Water from the coast at Stonehaven up into what is now the Feteresso Forest, made higher or steeper where needed. The steepened bank was revetted to prevent it collapsing, as was done with anti-tank ditches. Near Stonehaven, where the bank was lowest, it was topped by concrete anti-tank cubes, and preparations were made for the town to be fortified. Cubes were also used to reinforce vulnerable points on the river bank or to block fords.

The Line was extended a great distance to the west into the mountains with defences being concentrated on mountain passes, at Bridge of Dye, the Devil's Elbow and the main route between Perth and Inverness.



Ian Shepherd at the pillbox at Findlaystone.



Vulnerable beaches on the east coast and planned stop lines as listed on 7 July 1940. The Cowie Line and its western extensions are marked 6a, 6b and 6c.

At five points on the Cowie Water where bridges crossed the river, preparations were made to deal with significant assaults through the erection of roadblocks, pillboxes and wire obstacles and the digging of weapon pits. Around and between these heavily fortified areas, large parts of the river bank were modified, sometimes heavily.

Some 10km to the west of the last modified part of the Cowie Water is the next pass through the hills, at Bridge of Dye, where the Water of Dye, in a steep valley, forms a tank-proof barrier. Two

pillboxes disguised as part of the adjacent granite wall block access from the north to the bridge.

Apart from mountain paths the next pass through the mountains to the south is on the Braemar to Blairgowrie road, at the Devil's Elbow, where the valley was (and still is) blocked just south of the top of the pass, by a double line of massive anti-tank blocks overlooked by two pillboxes, one now demolished. Finally, provision was made to block both the Perth–Inverness road and railway at Drumochter or Dalwhinnie; no surviving trace of defences has been found.

Conclusion

The Cowie Line was a small part of a colossal national effort which saw hundreds of miles of defences – ditches, cubes, beach scaffolding, poles to prevent aeroplanes or gliders landing, minefields and thousands of miles of barbed wire – erected in a matter of weeks and elaborated over the following months.

We now know that 'Operation Sealion' was more intended to raise pressure on the UK government to sue for peace rather than a practicable invasion plan. There was, however, a widespread and understandable belief in the summer of 1940 that a German invasion was inevitable. Through the summer there were pools of defeatism; many people suffering under restrictive regulation and rationing expressed the view that 'they would be just as well off under Hitler'; pettifogging bureaucrats in national and especially local government reacted very slowly to the rapidly changing circumstances; many in the country felt that the prudent thing to do would be to reach a peace with Germany. The majority however merely wanted to be doing something useful - through the Home Guard or volunteering to dig anti-tank ditches. Despite widespread confusion, bumbling and uncertainty the British Army, supported by huge numbers of volunteers and joined in the autumn by the Polish Army, worked miracles of construction, while also training for the battle to come. The very fact of the construction of the defences expressed an intention to resist, and that indeed may have been part of their aim.

Most of the remains of these defences have been demolished; Ian and I shared a belief that it is important to preserve much of what is left, as a monument to a major crisis and what some would argue was a turning point in world history, '[British] Failure in 1940 would... have led to prolonged human suffering on a scale dwarfing anything that had gone before' leaving Europe under either a Nazi or Soviet tyranny (Bungay 2000). Almost all of the structures and

earthworks of the Cowie Line survive in very good condition and it can be seen as one of the best-preserved stop lines in Britain, albeit one of the smallest. It is to be hoped that further scheduling will take place on the Cowie Line and on other stop lines and the defended beaches.

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‘Scottish Archaeology: the state of the nation’. What’s happened since the late seventies?

Ian Ralston, University of Edinburgh

The joint paper I shall discuss stems from Ian’s early days as Grampian Regional Council’s archaeologist – the first local authority archaeological post-holder in Scotland. A version was first presented to the Centre for Scottish Studies here in Aberdeen in 1975. Thereafter we had occasions to develop it – before the student societies of the two universities then teaching archaeology in Scotland: Glasgow (in late 1977) and, the text slightly revised, Edinburgh (of which we were both graduates) the following March. The slim pamphlet we turned it into is, I imagine – aside from examples in copyright libraries – all but unfindable now. The reasons I’d like to revive it today are that its contents represent facets of Ian that he never lost: deliberate but not impossible idealism, combined with the sheer heady joy of tilting at windmills. I hope it serves to illuminate Ian’s interests in a whole gamut of sub-fields within Scottish archaeology – from the administratively practical to the intellectual.

The presentation was aimed at undergraduate student archaeologists, the new generation that was coming forward in increasing numbers. What we hoped to show was that there ought to be more and better opportunities for them to become practicing archaeologists – and that, importantly, within Scotland – than seemed likely even a few years previously. Nowadays, considerations of the place of archaeology within the contemporary world are required by the Quality Assurance Agency’s Benchmark Statement on teaching the discipline at university level, but those were other days with other customs. The vulgarities of actually finding

a job hardly impinged on Faculties of Arts.

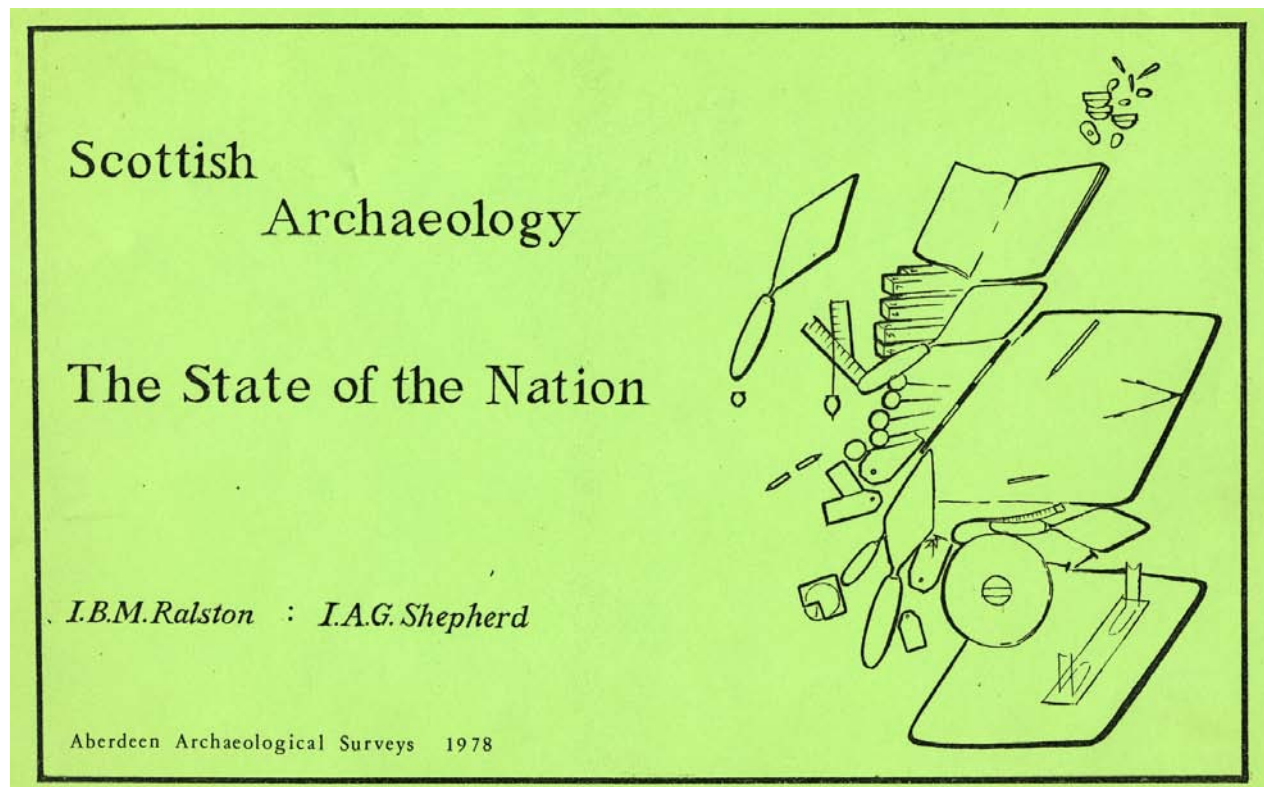
Both newly ensconced in the boom town of Aberdeen, these seemed to us exciting times, full of possibilities of change within the Scottish archaeology we were beginning to know. We felt the downbeat assessment of Scottish archaeology proffered in the only Scottish contribution, by Iain Crawford, to Rahtz’s 1974 *Rescue Archaeology*—in short that it was a ‘burnt-out case’—might once have been true but was by then wide, albeit not well wide, of the mark. As an indicator of the attitudes of those times, *Rescue News* (the then crusading and influential magazine of the Trust for British Archaeology) headlined its Spring 1977 issue ‘Stirrings in Scotland’. Although *Rescue*’s account concentrated on the late Dr Margaret Stewart’s critical report to the Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland (a generation later, now, too, no longer surviving) on perceived failings of the central government archaeological service, maps within the newsletter graphically portrayed changes afoot, illustrating the steady if slow dissemination of field archaeological posts across the landscapes and townscapes of Scotland. Overall, numbers of things were happening or seemed in the offing: there were grounds for optimism, especially writing at the kitchen table late in the evening with a glass of cooking whisky within reach.

The Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments, its budget for fieldwork rising in a way unimaginable in 1970, was moving from Westminster control to the Scottish Office; the legislative amendments that would become the 1979 Ancient Monuments Act were already being trailed; Glasgow University had appointed the first (and still the only) Dalrymple Professor of Archaeology and was plainly focusing on Scottish material in a significant (but by no means exclusive) way; the Scottish Antiquaries, cajoled into action by Dr Grant Simpson, had produced policy papers on key issues affecting aspects of the archaeological heritage, in a way never done since. And, if the archaeological

component of Ordnance Survey was already threatened, the possibility of devolution and all that might entail seemed just around the corner....

The original lecture tried to do three things: to outline the state and fabric of Scottish archaeology as it then existed; to consider associated problems and shortcomings; and to propose a future model as to how field archaeology in the country might be organized. These notes can outline only a few of the issues, some of which have receded into the mists of time, although others remain entirely topical. A core example of the former was the fate of the Archaeological Division of Ordnance Survey, then the holder of the national non-intensive sites and monuments record in their card index and associated maps: this was before the development of local sites and monuments records, still less their computerization. Our consideration of the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments ranged widely but summarily over its remit, with Ian being instrumental in regretting on the one hand the exclusivity of

the language in the literature made available to visitors to the State's monuments and on the other—and crucially—the proportionately slight impact IAM had on development proposals within the planning system. That the Ancient Monuments Board had spawned a Committee for Rescue Archaeology was agreed to be beneficial, although judgement was reserved as to whether its recommendations would actually be implemented. We welcomed increased, if still modest, archaeological staffing of the National Museum of Antiquities, still in Edinburgh's Queen Street, lamented the stalling of schemes for a new Museum, and were pleased that a less acquisitive outlook there meant that archaeology in local museums was beginning to flourish. We noted the strong link surviving between the Museum and the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the latter providing four Trustees on the governing Board appointed by the Secretary of State; were he here now Ian would assuredly complain vociferously that the National Museum now has a Board of Trustees approved by our nationalist government that lacks anyone with



Lekky's artwork for the cover

any recognizable expertise on Scotland's history and archaeology. At the Royal Commission we welcomed rising involvement in what was called emergency survey, complementing the Inventory work then central to their endeavours. We were heartened by developments in the Universities, notably the Glasgow Chair – its creation at last giving Scotland a senior academic post focused primarily on the archaeology of the country, in our judgement possibly the last place in Europe so to do.

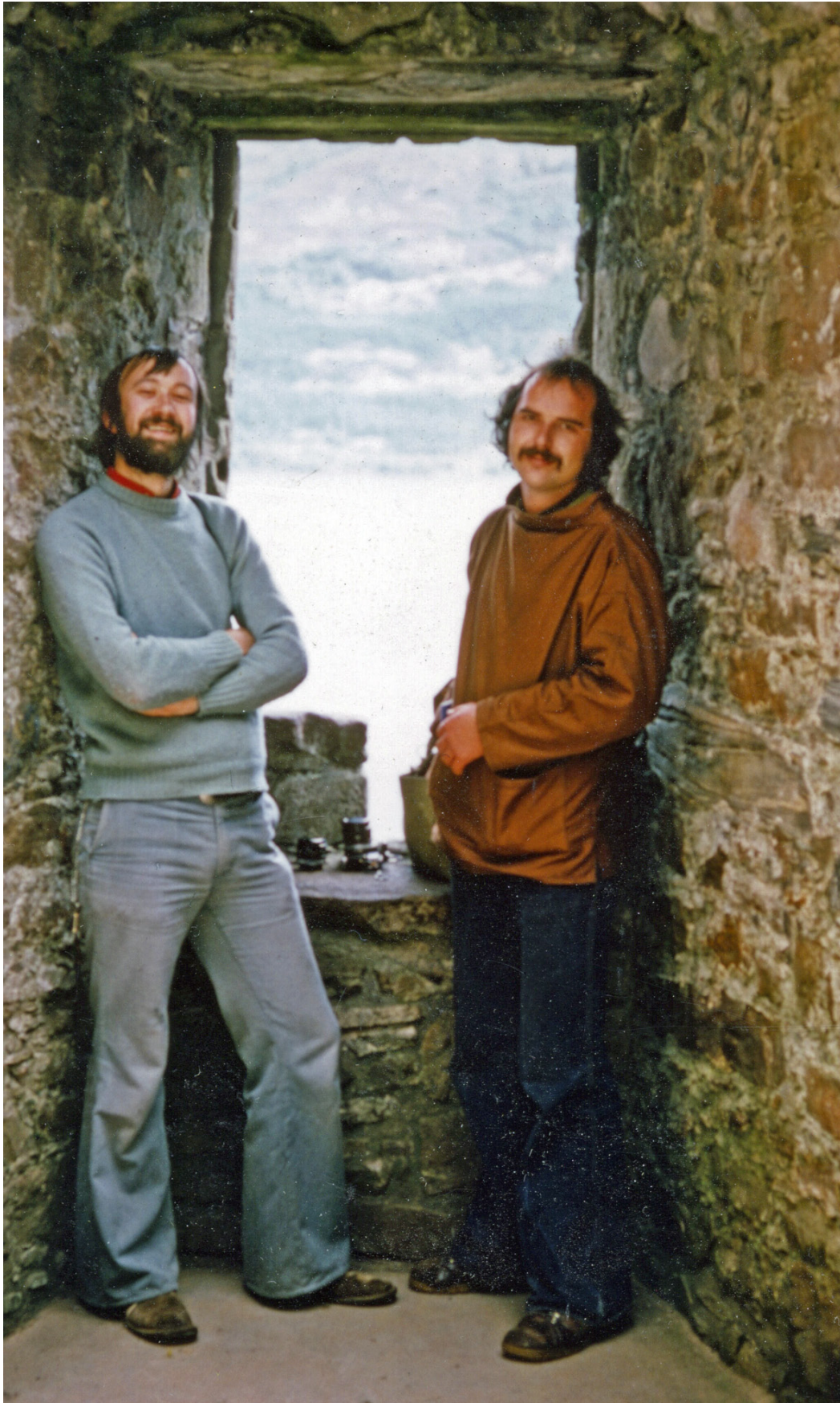
Overall we reckoned that there were fewer than 30 professional archaeologists in Scotland outwith those bound by civil service conditions, and almost all were employed indirectly by state moneys, or by local government. These were changing days indeed, with the creation of small urban excavation teams, albeit on rather precarious bases, the first locally-based aerial surveys by RCAHMS and others, and the availability of new sources of support for field archaeology (notably Manpower Services Commission). The beginnings of archaeological services in local government were critical, although staffing levels were far short of the 20 posts considered necessary by the Scottish Antiquaries.

Aspects we considered underdeveloped included efforts to engage the public in what Ian already termed the 'historic environment'. Realization of the consequences of the fact that sites key to field archaeology represented a land use, and that the planning system was—and remains—the key regulator of land uses was also underplayed. From this stemmed the need to integrate archaeology into the graphic and documentary systems of local authorities, which Ian had precociously managed in the *Grampian Regional Report* published by the new authority in 1976, and to quantify and evaluate data on sites category by category in order to justify their importance and the need to safeguard them.

In retrospect, our entirely uncoded scheme for the future organization of Scottish Archaeology is a pre-Thatcherite curiosity. Tailored to Scottish

circumstances of where the population and the sites were, it differed from contemporary English schemes. Its central concern, archaeology as land use, saw local authorities as key players; and thus archaeological posts distributed across Scotland. Oversight of the system would however have remained in Edinburgh with a multi-faceted Central Directorate, tasked with key functions then done by RCAHMS, IAM and OS; this body was envisaged to have wide-ranging powers over everything from site interpretation to ensuring publication. It would have set national priorities. The CD would also have controlled permanent outstations (perhaps in Dumfries and certainly in Inverness) and mobile units – the model being the then Central Excavation Unit. All this would have been integrated with the developing SMRs in local authorities, particularly in the Regional Councils. Universities also had roles to play in providing services from the analytical to the writing of synthesis. Postgraduate teaching in the practicalities of archaeology (and Ian was later involved in the early days of this) was essential to let graduates enter a profession that might in due course be regulated by a professional body. *Dirigiste* and statist as all this now seems, it was intended to provide proper careers, rather than the plethora of temporary contracts that then characterized the stop-go cycles of Scottish archaeology.

What we did not foresee was the partial disengagement of the state from such activities, nor the extension of the 'polluter pays' philosophy to the treatment of the historic environment and the development of applied archaeological companies. We were 20 at the end of the first Wilson government, so such developments were simply not then on our mental radar.



The authors, having recently had their hair cut, about the time the paper was written (photo: Noel Fojut)

'Always Aye' – Connecting the Dots with Ian as a colleague

Bruce Mann,
Aberdeenshire
Archaeology
Service

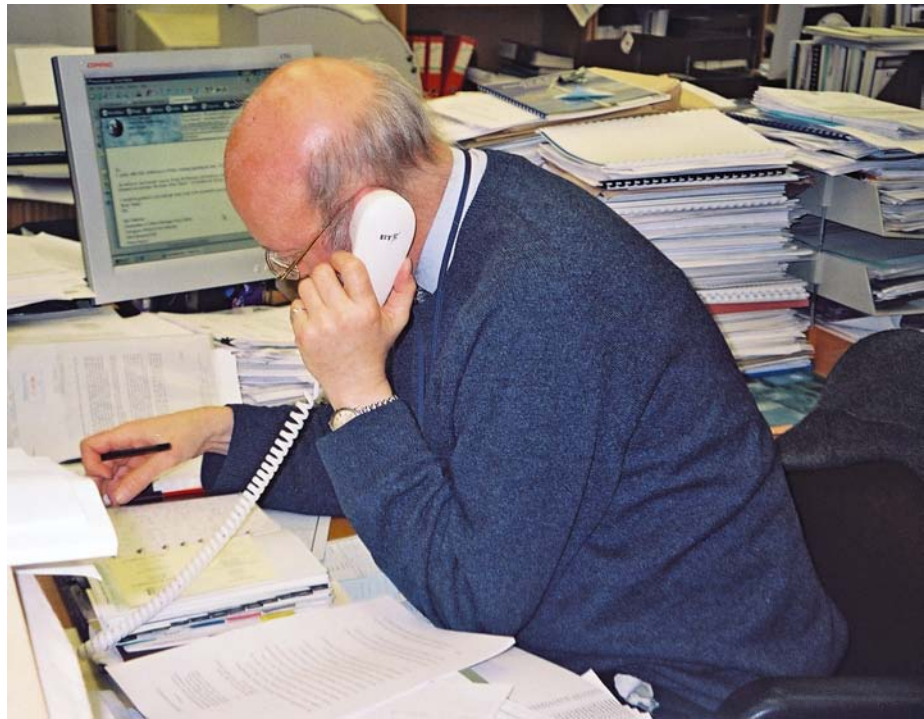
As I gather my thoughts to write this I realise that to sum up Ian's contribution to our sector over the decades is nearly impossible. Other colleagues are better positioned to explain Ian's importance as the first of the Regional Archaeologists in Scotland, and his subsequent development

of that role over the next three decades. The range and depth of the papers presented at this conference alone clearly demonstrate that as a man he was involved in nearly every aspect of our profession, driving it forward whenever he could.

Therefore I turn my thoughts to focusing on Ian's contribution to us as individuals instead, and his positive 'always aye' outlook on work. For me, working with him ensured a never-ending learning curve as he dealt with those areas of grey we so often find ourselves in. As the historic environment once again faces major upheaval and change with finances becoming constricted, reorganisation rife and a generation of our peers retire, we stand at yet another crossroads realising just how much we each miss Ian's steadying hand and firm beliefs.

When I first met Ian I was but a young schoolboy excavating under the guidance of Moira at Craigievar Castle here in Aberdeenshire some 20 years ago. Then, as on every other

site visit I had the pleasure of accompanying him on in later years, Ian could appear to the uninitiated as a harmless Ronald Dahl type character as he stroked his beard, peered



Ian working at his desk in 2005

through those glasses and gave that laugh. Then the initiation came. His quick brain that held an encyclopaedic knowledge of all things archaeological and architectural in the North-east, the delivery of a memorised quote from the most obscure of sources, and the expression of his dry observational wit. He personified professionalism, standing up for archaeology at all times regardless of who was on the receiving end of his furore.

Setting aside the fact that that encyclopaedic mind was also used for a worryingly in-depth knowledge of 'Big Brother', that his putting skills at the annual staff competition could be described as 'underwhelming', or that his idea of filing was akin to recreating stratigraphic layers about his desk that would under normal practice require hard hats to be worn on approach, he did instil within me an understanding of how everything 'fitted together', how to 'connect the dots'. His simple explanation of how we can work in partnership to manage the archaeological

resource served to deliver a vision of our profession that perhaps we should all take time to reflect on.

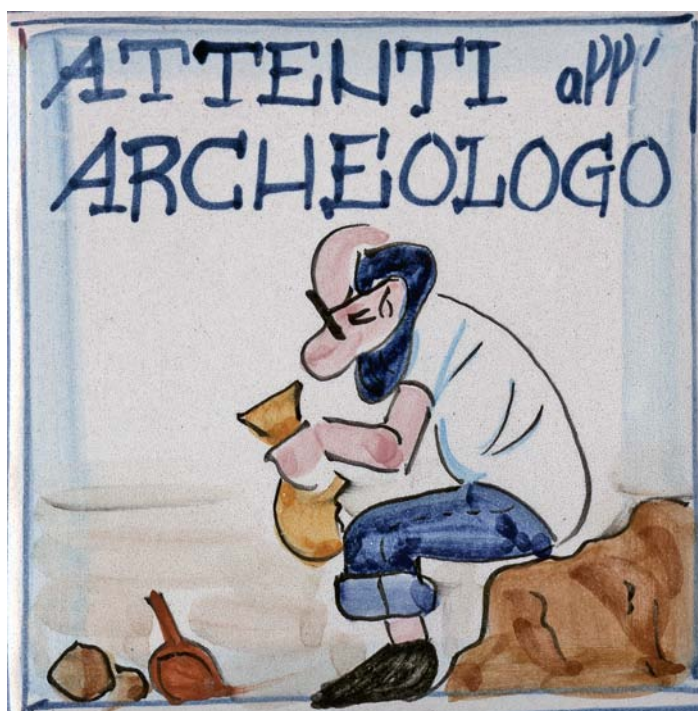
The last great upheaval for Council archaeological services was back in 1996 when Regions and Districts gave way to 32 Local Authorities. As the Council for Scottish Archaeology reported at the time, the "effects on archaeology are not yet clear, though they could be far-reaching and, in some areas, highly damaging."

Of course as I undertook my first contract under Ian in the spring of 1997 I was blissfully unaware of the consequences that reorganisation had just caused. My time was occupied instead with correcting mistakes his sweeping editorial eye picked out; a lesson learned that still has me double-checking everything I write now. He quickly dispelled the common misunderstanding that Sites & Monuments Records/Historic Environment Records and their curators are just about maintaining databases, a view that is still prevalent today in certain quarters. His calm, laid back approach to life meant he was never fazed no matter how urgent a situation had become. This was perhaps best exemplified by his occasional misjudgements in just how far an office chair could be safely leant back in, resulting in commando-style rolls across the floor or the sound of his resigned chuckle as one of those paper towers around his desk avalanched. No matter the issue, don't panic; just get to the right solution.

Fourteen years on and we appear to have returned to that same 1996 summation by the CSA as the wave of the credit crunch breaks upon our shores, requiring us once more to steady ourselves and consider what the right solution is. New Policy developments at a National level, such as the Marine Act and the Historic Environment Bill, add further responsibilities to an already over-stretched sector. With the active protection and management of the bulk of the historic

environment, as undertaken by Local Authorities, still not being recognised as being worthy of statutory consideration, I do fear for where we are heading. Commercial units as well, whose workloads stem from the development management process, must be wondering how they are to survive if the curators may not.

And so my thoughts come full circle. It was a privilege to have known Ian as both a colleague and a friend. It was also a privilege to have gained an understanding from him of how our profession has developed over the last 35 years, and where he saw it heading. What we must now ensure is that we don't falter in the pursuit of that vision, of delivering truly joined up thinking across our respective government, commercial and academic bodies, and of ensuring a future where Local Authority archaeological services continue to provide the link between the theory of policy and the practicalities of implementation. We only have one chance at preserving our archaeological heritage, and in partnership we can achieve that together. This thought, this vision, was Ian's final contribution to each of us.



The Careful Archaeologist

Belnagoak and other stories (pace Flora Garry)

Charlie and Hilary Murray

In Ian's Grampian volume of the series *'Exploring Scotland's Heritage'* (Shepherd 1986, 9) he mentions the 360° panorama from the Hill of Belnagoak in the heart of the Buchan countryside. Two years before he and Lekky had helped us move to our farm there and for us those words reflect conversations over boozy meals and walks up the hill with Ian 'surveying his realm' – Aberdeenshire. In this combined paper we each take a single theme from conversations that took place for over a quarter of a century.

Hilary Murray: Light and livestock in a roundhouse reconstruction at Belnagoak.

Ian was responsible for involving me with prehistoric roundhouses when he encouraged me to reconstruct the roundhouse at Archaeolink. However, there are limitations on the experimental work possible within a public structure, so, in 2005, Charlie and I, with the help of friends, built a roundhouse on our own land at Belnagoak.

This was based on one excavated by Murray Cook at Kintore and was 11m in diameter with a sod wall and an inner ring of 11 earthfast posts supporting a ringbeam. The roof, of reed thatch with a sod capping, was raised at the entrance but without a porch.

The entrance was orientated within the range between east and south-east common to 48% of roundhouses with known orientation (Pope 2003, 173). There has been considerable discussion regarding the meaning - functional or cosmological - of roundhouse orientation and the movement of light within. The Belnagoak



Part of that 360° view from Belnagoak, looking to Bennachie

reconstruction was an opportunity to produce an extensive dataset of light movement in a roundhouse. Once a month for a year, lux levels were recorded every two hours at 25 stations within the building and one outside.

The results show a greater complexity of light patterning than had been predicted. They suggest that the early morning light is focussed within and to the north of the entry, spreading south of the entrance by mid to late morning and then returning to the entrance and north by mid to late afternoon. Subtleties such as the brightness when snow reflected light inside are a reminder of the influences of weather. More significantly, readings at the centre of the building show a significant decrease in light with height above floor level -which must be a factor in considering reconstruction and the suggested use of loft space.



The cattle in the roundhouse

Having kept cattle for years, our other focus was to house livestock within a roundhouse in this northern location over two winters. The cattle we chose, based on size, were Dexters – an average cow being 1.70m length from nose to tail and 1.17m in height. We housed six cattle in the periphery of the roundhouse between the inner post ring and the outer wall, with two pens of loose animals and a halter-trained heifer housed as a tied cow in another pen. All the animals could comfortably move and lie down but by the end of the winter we felt the calves had grown to a stage where space was becoming limited. This suggests that 1 cow per segment



Belnagoak roundhouse in winter

(c 2.8m of the circumference), possibly with calf at foot, would be the practical maximum. Generally, management was easy and our vet who monitored the cattle commented on their good condition and contentment.

We had hoped to test if cattle tread was causal in the development of ring ditches within the periphery of some roundhouses. However this was not realistic as, while prehistoric livestock may have been housed with little bedding, good husbandry now requires a reasonable depth of bedding- which inevitably masked the erosion effect. There appeared to be some slight erosion after two winters but this was as likely to be the result of mucking out as of wear. On sites where phosphate levels suggest livestock in an excavated building it is possible that environmental sampling might show potential bedding species. In considering buildings where interrupted erosion scoops have been interpreted as evidence for tied cows, we must ask how cattle were moved in and out as it would seem unlikely that they would be driven or led across the 'living area' at the centre of the building- it would be far more natural to lead them around the periphery, a process which would develop more generalised wear.

Most who have suggested housing cattle in roundhouses, have considered that they were only housed at night. Generally this might be true but in northern Scotland there are times when even hardy cattle need daytime shelter – sometimes for several weeks. Both regimes have implications. If

cattle are to be taken in and out daily we should expect considerable erosion at the entrance. If they are kept inside they need feed and water. Even small cattle need 6 - 10 gallons of water daily – we need to be more aware of the proximity of water to excavated settlements. In northern Scotland, even if cattle were generally taken out to graze, there is often snow cover so we need to consider what they were being fed; it possible that gorse and broom - traditionally used in Scotland - may have been used as fodder (Milliken & Bridgewater 2006, 240-45).

In one of his publications Ian quoted Dorothy L Sayer's 'Facts are like cows. If you look them in the face hard enough they generally run away'. To respond with another Sayer's quotation - which Ian would have delighted in identifying - 'Very dangerous things, theories'.

Charlie Murray: Back to the dinner table - Exotic medieval tableware from Brechin

One of the pleasures of having friends for a meal is setting the table with one's 'best dishes'. However, even our best is no match for the more exotic tableware we recently excavated in Brechin – discoveries that Ian would have enjoyed.

In 2009 and 2010, Hilary and I directed a community excavation in Bishop's Close, Brechin. The small site near the Cathedral was on the edge of the grounds of the medieval Bishop's palace. Under foundations of 18th- and 19th-century buildings lay a surprisingly deep stratified deposit sealing a stone precinct wall and a large medieval pit. From this pit an impressive range of medieval pottery and a fragment of exotic medieval glass were recovered.

In as much as finds are an indication of status, the material from Bishop's Close would indicate a site of very high status. The occurrence of six medieval coins from such a small area is exceptional. They also provide valuable

dating evidence, being coins of Henry III and Edward I, from 1247 – 1310 AD. In fact, two are exceedingly rare being, respectively, a round halfpenny and farthing, minted in Waterford in Ireland.

Of the considerable quantity of pottery recovered, the most remarkable was an almost complete greyware pitcher. This vessel is a Low Countries import and almost certainly from the coastal region of Flanders. Examples comparable to the Brechin pitcher have been found at Lampernisse (Verhaeghe, 1983, fig 7.8, p 82). The only other almost complete greyware pitcher from northern Scotland is from a site in Elgin excavated in 1977 by Bill Lindsay (Verhaeghe & Lindsay 1983). Verhaeghe identifies two distinct sub-types of this form of pitcher. While both have the same general body shape, the earlier, dating to 1250 – 1325, has a slightly funnel-shaped neck with distinct external rilling, while the later has an almost cylindrical neck with a collared rim and dates to c1350 -1375. The Elgin example falls into this later category but the Brechin pitcher is certainly of the earlier group - dating which agrees with the coin evidence.

This date is also borne out by other finds from the pit. One of these is another example of exotic pottery. A complete shield, covered in a rich lustrous green glaze, and in immaculate condition - albeit missing the rest of the pot! - is part of a Scarborough Ware Knight's jug and almost identical to one from Moot Hall, Nottingham, dated to c1300.

Perhaps the most surprising of the pit's contents was a tiny piece of glass. Research showed it to be the fin of a glass goblet with mould-blown fins. This type of glass has a distinctive shape and a series of 'fins' or sometimes 'ribs' decorating the side or lower portion of the bowl. It is typical of a type of stemmed glass made in northern Europe, probably in France or the Netherlands. Harden (1975) dates an almost complete example found at Nieuwendoord Castle to the mid 13th century, at the latest. One of the



Medieval greyware pitcher from Brechin

earliest examples known in Britain is from a pit at Cuckoo Lane, Southampton which is dated to the late 13th century. Pieces of a similar date come from Ludgershall, Wiltshire and Goldsmith Street, Exeter (Tyson, 2000, 55, fig 5).

Although fin-moulded glasses of this type occur in many assemblages of medieval glass in England, to date, I know of no similar pieces from Scottish sites.

I think that Ian would have been delighted to see that Brechin – a town within his bailiwick – is, archaeologically, proving to be a serious rival to medieval Perth and Aberdeen!

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Excavation and Publication: Some Further Comments

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In 1979 Ian joined me as a member of the editorial team producing the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* (hereafter *PSAS*). In the same year Leslie Alcock sent for publication a short but important statement about the publication of excavations. It appeared in 1980 (Alcock 1978). This was the time when the difficulties in publishing the expanded fieldwork resulting from rescue archaeology were first becoming pressing. Alcock advocated the production of two versions of the excavation report:

- i. a synthetic, summary account of the principal elements revealed by the excavation
- ii. 'the primary account' – a Cranborne Chase-style excavation report in which all details of the excavation and its finds were described and illustrated.

He envisaged the summary account receiving conventional publication and that the primary account would be deposited in readily-accessible archives.

Prompted by Alcock's article, the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland established a working party. This adopted Alcock's essential position as the Society's publishing policy for excavations but with one modification: the primary report was to be delivered on microfiche in the volume of *PSAS* in which the summary account was printed. Ian laid this out in an editorial in his first volume as editor (Shepherd 1983). As far as I can see this is the first ever editorial in *PSAS* after more than 130 years of publication. During his years as editor Ian vigorously pursued the agenda promoted in this editorial.

But what is happening now, some 30 years on from Alcock's original piece? It has to be

recognised, of course, that neither he nor the members of the working party could have anticipated the developments in ICT that would fill those decades. But these developments only indirectly affected the publication of excavations for the first two decades, mainly through changes in print technology that enabled plates to be integrated into the text. The Society now offers three modes of publication for excavation reports. It continues to publish *PSAS*. Since 1982 it has produced a monograph series that while not exclusively devoted to the publication of excavations has largely been concerned with the publication of large-scale work of that kind. And since 2003 it has offered publication in *Scottish Archaeological Internet Reports (SAIR)*. Forty-three volumes have been published as I write, most, but not all, presenting data from excavations. This series is the only one of the three that directly harnesses the new technologies, particularly those associated with the Web.

All of these changes have originated as responses to a single factor: the ever-expanding datasets generated by more and more excavations. The monograph series was essentially intended to deal with large excavations that could not be accommodated in *PSAS*. But this did not deal with the expanding number of smaller rescue excavations. In the mid 1990s the Society began to publish a series of double volumes intended to remove the backlog in publication of rescue excavations (Welfare 1995). This was far from universally welcomed and the policy required the defence of a second editorial in the following volume (O'Sullivan 1996). Achieving the goals of the policy required six double volumes. It is fair to say that much of the material that filled these volumes would now, if they had been developer funded, have appeared only as grey literature. But because this work had been paid for by the State it required the justifications provided by formal publication. The Society bought into Historic Scotland's agenda that clearing the backlog was by far the



most important publication issue of the day. What was good for Historic Scotland though was less obviously good for Scottish archaeology. Sadly, it was a false horizon. The desire to eliminate the backlog came in part from Historic Scotland's awareness that future backlogs would be the responsibility of developers and the commercial units they employed not Historic Scotland.

Nor was the policy delivered without cost to the general wellbeing of Scottish archaeology. There

were a number of important consequences of these events. Among the most significant were the cessation of microfiche production and the suspension of the review articles that had appeared regularly in the previous decade and a half. Microfiche ceased to appear in volume 127 of *PSAS*, the third of the double volumes published in 1997. At first sight this seems a straightforward matter of technical obsolescence; microfiche appeared clunky as PCs became the norm. But where did the

data go that had previously been appearing in microfiche? Back largely, of course, into the print content of the volume. This was a significant change in the Society's publication policy that had hitherto remained unaltered since Ian's editorial of 1983. At the time it was not perceived that way. I cannot recall any discussions of the issue by the Council of the Society, although my memory may be faulty. It seems in retrospect to have been introduced as a technical modification and its implications were lost in the muddying of the waters that came with eliminating the backlog through the double volumes.

Equally, the suspension of the review articles appeared to be a comparable pragmatic response designed only to free up space in the volume. They remain suspended today, a decade after the last of the double volumes appeared. These articles provided an overview of a major topic, usually a chronological period, by an established specialist. They sought to summarise current knowledge and in the process helped to identify what major research questions remained for investigation. How far the *Scottish Archaeological Research Framework* (ScARF), currently in preparation, will help to fill that gap in the future remains to be seen. But, unlike the review articles, it is a collective effort with all the strengths and weaknesses that such collaborations involve.

Both of these developments ran counter to the central tenet of Alcock's proposals. His ideas were driven by a belief that the amount of data contained in Cranborne Chase-style excavation reports threatened to overwhelm the reader as much as it did the available publication mechanisms. He was not principally concerned with alleviating the financial pressures that increased data were imposing on the journals and monographs. His aim was to enable specialists to be aware of more than the new material in their particular area of interest. 'The appearance in quantity of illustrated site summaries,' he wrote, 'would give us all an

opportunity and an incentive to learn what was happening in the next field but one to our own. A greater stimulus to the health and vigour of our discipline would be hard to imagine' (Alcock 1978, 6). His concern then was with the reader who needed to be freed from the search for the key points lodged within masses of data. Assigning that data to microfiche and the provision of review articles addressed this fundamental problem from two angles.

Instead of building on Alcock's proposals, though, we have engineered a collective retreat from his belief that publication structures should be about empowering the reader. It was not, I believe, a conscious, planned retreat despite the fact that there were always those who did not embrace Alcock's ideas. Rather it came about because the central thesis became represented by the technology used to achieve it. As this technology, microfiche, became obsolete, we made the mistaken assumption that the ideas that prompted its use could also be discarded. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth.

We have allowed the changes in technology, and particularly the emergence of the Web as a potent deliverer of data, to beguile us into believing that the Cranborne Chase-style excavation report is the ideal we should still be aspiring to. That is what we now essentially see in all three publication modes of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Necessarily, the practice often fails to deliver the aspiration. Yet the arguments that Alcock adduced in support of his position have never been refuted.

Indeed, the current situation makes Alcock's ideas more compelling than they were when he published them. He wanted to see in all of us what he had in good measure, clarity of purpose. He wanted excavation reports that separated what was truly important from what was only of passing interest. As our information-base expands yet further we need that more than ever. Now we rightly embrace the Web as a key medium without beginning to address,

as an academic community, the downside of that alluring hug. For example, when there is effectively no restraint on space, economy of expression seems to weaken greatly. And link rot, the inaccessibility of web resources cited in support of an argument, still runs at between 40% and 50% after five years (eg. Sellitto 2005; Dimitrova & Bugeja 2007). These and other issues, predominantly around long-term preservation, are not exclusive to archaeology. But we do need to consider whether emerging generic solutions deal with our concerns.

Most of all, we need to return to Alcock's point that we need publication we can use effectively and easily, publication that helps us make best use of our time. As we have noted, he envisaged opportunities for us to engage with 'the next field but one to our own'. Scotland's archaeological community is not so large that it could not benefit immeasurably from the enlarged critical groups such a situation might create. Let us give serious consideration to re-adopting Alcock's proposals. It would certainly have delighted Ian, I think.

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Galleries, gardens and gates: transforming the House of Muchall into a setting for lordship

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Castle Fraser
coat-of-arms

This paper, which presents some of the results of a programme of research undertaken by Tom Addyman and myself over the last few years at Castle Fraser (formerly the House of Muchall) is offered in recognition of Ian Shepherd's deep understanding of the buildings and landscapes of the great estates of northeast Scotland. Through a combination of archaeological, architectural, documentary and field research, we are beginning to put together a very detailed picture of the setting for the lordship which Andrew Fraser of Stoneywood and Muchall created for himself and his descendants in the early 17th century.

The materiality of lordship

Towards the very end of his life, Andrew Fraser (1568/74-1636) was created 1st Lord Fraser in the bonanza of honours which accompanied the coronation of Charles I as King of Scots in Edinburgh. His entry to the ranks of the nobility appears to have been the culmination of a long personal programme in which he undertook a series of strategic moves designed to demonstrate that he was eminently fit for lordship.

A crucial part of his strategy was to develop and elaborate his house at Muchall, legally established as his principal seat in 1601. This was a hugely expensive programme of works on a vast scale, which stretched over at least 20 years.

Various scholars have recognized the key importance of the architectural details and designed landscapes of great country seats in 16th- and 17th-century Scotland as symbolic expressions of rank and power. However, these aspects are generally discussed as a reflection of status already gained: having arrived in a position of aristocratic authority, one then demonstrates it to the world in physical form. But the materiality of these great estates is not simply a passive backdrop against which the noble lifestyle can be set off to advantage. Rather, Andrew Fraser's creation of this material world of cultural sophistication at the heart of his demesne was one of the means by which he got to where he wanted to be. It was how he demonstrated his credibility: ostentatious consumption indicating not only his vast disposable wealth – a sign of the possession of land/tenants/supporters – but also his taste, which could be used to signify important political liaisons with other noble Scottish families, as well as setting him metaphorically in a framework of cultured European nobility. Importantly, this was all couched within a vocabulary expressing loyalty to the Crown. It was a major statement of Andrew Fraser's fitness for rank, before the fact.

Galleries...

The house that Fraser inherited in 1588 was a Z-plan tower house, consisting of a rectangular central block with a square tower at its NW corner, in which a great wheel-stair rose to the first floor hall, and with a sturdy round tower to the southeast. The first phase of his great architectural programme was to build upwards, in the flamboyant statement of verticality which, from the close of the 16th century, was becoming an architectural signifier of rank particular to northeast Scotland. Provided with a viewing platform eight storeys up, from which to survey the great demesne, the hugely accomplished upper works by Master Mason J Bel were completed by 1618. Internal decoration was underway in the early 1620s, when Fraser

commissioned the mason James Leiper to pave the hall 'in the latest fashion'.

Being *à la mode* is an important aspect of Andrew Fraser's projection of himself as a man of taste and culture, as is his use of craftsmen of very high quality. The great armorial panel which dominates the principal approach to the castle has been compared in style and quality with decorative carvings at Huntly Castle. Fraser is thus employing craftsmen on a par with those employed by a major peer, the Marquis of Huntly. The prominence of the royal coat of arms is also, of course, an overt, tactical statement of loyalty to the Crown.

The centrepiece of Andrew Fraser's ceremonial entrance, over which the royal arms presided, was another indicator of his position amongst the cultural cognoscenti. Replacing the wheel-stair in the square tower, a great external stone staircase now led up to a new principal entrance, the diamond studs of its door frame an expression of European Renaissance style. Two obelisks with ball finials sat at the foot of these stairs – some of their constituent parts now form an 18th-century eyecatcher on the estate, while one of the pyramid capstones now sits atop a prehistoric standing stone in the grounds.

Andrew Fraser's next building campaign, carried out in the 1630s, emulated the style of structures being built by the nobility in the lowlands around Edinburgh – an approximation of the classically-inspired *villa suburbana*. Two long, low wings were extended either side of the main house, enclosing the great stair within what would have been a vastly more impressive courtyard than whatever had stood there before, entered through a gate with two porter's lodges.

It is particularly on the decorative dormer-heads of these wings that Andrew Fraser elaborated the concept of lineage. By a careful use of monograms, the family's noble status was made to appear as of greater antiquity than it actually was. The connections with nobility that the Frasers had begun to establish were emphasized, as was the stability of the family of

Fraser of Muchall, which could be expected to carry on down in perpetuity through the male line. That the lordship became extinct in less than a century underlines the fact that this is a confident, publicly-expressed statement of genealogical continuity, in a real-world context of extreme uncertainty.

Three costed appraisals of extensive damage to the glass windows, ironwork and timberwork of the House of Muchall, undertaken in October 1655, give us a rare insight into the internal layout of the building – almost certainly the arrangement as planned by Andrew Fraser. Because the smith, joiner and glazier worked their way through the castle from room to room as they assessed the extent of the damage (the result of sacking at some point between 1646 and 1655), it has been possible, by linking these records to observations of the archaeology of the building, to arrive at a fairly comprehensive understanding of how the house functioned.

On the ground floor, reached from within the inner court, were a series of service rooms, including two substantial 'victual houses' for the storage of estate grain, an important aspect of lordly wealth. Reached from the great central stair, the first floor was taken up with high status apartments: a formal, public sequence of hall, dining-room and gallery, the latter stretching the full length of the east wing, with another, smaller gallery in the west wing, leading to Lady Fraser's rooms. This second sequence, while perhaps slightly more private in nature, was effectively a female state apartment. A multiplicity of galleries was a clear indicator of rank. Archaeological evidence, 18th-/19th-century documents and early 20th-century photographs of the castle interiors before major building works combine to give tantalizing hints of the splendid decorative schemes which originally graced the galleries and other high-status apartments.

The great round tower with its high-level belvedere contained guest accommodation, while the square tower held private rooms: the

charter house, rooms set aside for specific male members of the family, the woman house for female servants and perhaps the children of the house and, at the top, a suite of rooms for the 'maister' and his personal servants. Lord Fraser had state apartments in the main house, above the hall. The Nethermost Great Chamber, with its great bed, must have functioned as the chamber of dais, leading to the bedchamber beyond, again with great bed. Finally, another pair of high status rooms furnished with great beds lay above these state rooms.

Taken altogether, this represents a house which allows for hospitality of a very high level, with spacious and extensive guest accommodation and a multiplicity of fashionable, well-appointed state apartments. The concept of lordly hospitality was an important strand of the 16th-/17th-century social fabric, a means of establishing and maintaining political, cultural and social alliances. Thus, in his re-ordering of the House of Muchall, Fraser was taking care to furnish himself with the necessary accoutrements of nobility.

...gardens and gates

As for the grand landscape that Andrew Fraser designed to set off his principal seat, a set of late 18th-century estate plans gives us a very good idea of the framework, if not the detail, of the early 17th-century landscape. Typically, various enclosed courtyards surrounded the house, including the vast privy garden, overlooked by the great windows of the east gallery. A recent programme of geophysical survey and excavation has demonstrated that cultivation rigs were slighted to make way for this garden. Here again we see conspicuous consumption, in which productive agricultural land is taken over for primarily cultural use.

The linear structure of the designed landscape places the house at the crossing of major N-S and E-W axes. Impressive gates stood at the ends of the north and south avenues, the northern gateway seemingly adorned by two

further obelisks, matching those at the foot of the great entrance stair. An extensive complex of offices flanked this principal gateway; enhancing the grandeur of the entrance, this may also have formed part of Andrew Fraser's grand design. A very similar arrangement seems to have formed part of the Earl of Strathmore's mid 17th-century reworking of the designed landscape at Glamis, while Sir Robert Kerr's advice with regard to the early 17th-century recasting of the Ancrum estate makes it clear that a lengthy approach to the house was considered yet another indicator of rank. Certainly, Muchall's extended northern approach avenue with its series of gates and stairways, from which, as Ian Shepherd so eloquently observed, the castle was gradually revealed from the top down, was designed to impress.

Andrew Fraser was aiming high when he set out on his long strategic journey towards nobility. Played out over his lifetime, what was undoubtedly a complex game of politics was ultimately successful. At his House of Muchall, set in its noble landscape, we can see one of the material projects that helped him to achieve his ambition.



Dormers and turrets at Castle Fraser



Aerial views of Castle Fraser (Moir Greig)

Seeing Behind The Enlightenment: A new approach to Scottish architectural history

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Scotland's national architectural history has been bedevilled by Scotland's place within Britain. For, once it had accepted its role as North Britain in the mid 18th century and set out to exploit the resulting advantages – and exploit them it did, most certainly and beneficially, particularly in the Empire – the country had to adjust its inherited culture in line with the new reality. The historians of the enlightenment, William Robertson and David Hume particularly, duly demonstrated that under a period of arbitrary rule and a selfish aristocracy (which is how they characterised Scotland under the Stewarts). Scotland had been characterised by primitiveness and a lack of trade and culture; but after the Glorious Revolution of 1688, its world had changed.¹ In this argument, architectural and cultural history was deployed, regardless of accuracy, to serve the wider national interest.

Thus, when British architectural history was born in the early 19th century, pre- Enlightenment Scotland – with its European living pattern of apartment dwelling, its rhetorical architecture and metaphorically martial country seats - did not fit. The country earned its place in British architecture only with the work of Robert Adam; and coverage remained sporadic even thereafter.² For example, although Baronial architecture dominated Scottish life over five decades in the 19th century, to a more pervasive degree than the Gothic revival did in England, it is almost entirely absent from 'British' architectural histories – unless as a subset of Gothic. Of the British architectural historians, only Sir John Summerson understood the particular nature

of the Scots architectural culture; but since he could not embrace it within his history of British architecture, he relegated it to a long and thoughtful appendix.

What is worse, the Enlightenment's portrayal of a barbaric Scotland under the Stewarts had been reinforced by the perception that Scots sheltered in castles long after everybody else had quit them; and 18th-century antiquarians had duly scoured the remains of peaceable country seats for defensive features such as moats and drawbridges when there had been none. That legacy remains with us today – as witness an archaeological excavation around a fourth-rank tower in Edinburgh which allegedly found a wet moat. Very few if any of Scotland's c 5000 country seats had a wet moat: but they all had an inner 'close' or court, and most an outer court, and they all had walled enclosures creating agricultural microclimates. They would not otherwise have been sustainable. These would have made any moat impossible for all save the very grandest house.

Given this primitive preoccupation, it is not surprising that the first comprehensive Scottish architectural history was MacGibbon & Ross's *Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland* – with the emphasis very firmly upon castellated. They certainly attempted a chronology of a kind; but from our perspective had certain fundamental flaws. Generally, they ignored regime and social change; and were wholly preoccupied with towers at the expense of all the other essential accoutrements of a country seat. History repeating itself, and historians repeating each other, MacGibbon and Ross's view remained dominant until the last decade of the 20th century, when a change to the chronology was at last permitted. This time, however, large political change was assumed to have created architectural change. The two principal events thus selected were the Reformation in 1560 and the Civil Wars from 1637 – 1660,³ to suit one of Scotland's founding myths that the Reformation changed everything

in 1560. Architecturally, very little did, since Scotland was in the depths of a radical alteration to its architectural history that had begun in 1538 and would last till at least 1568. People should have read John Knox with rather more scepticism; or at least observed that neither England nor European countries ever predicated the Reformation or the counter Reformation as a driver of significant architectural change outside the churches themselves. Moreover, although change was allowed, it was presumed to be only minor modifications to a mediaeval prototype. Indeed, the Museum of Scotland still rejoices in assuming that the mediaeval period in Scotland lasted until 1707!⁴

The second event that was permitted to modify Scottish architectural immoveability was the civil war. In their *A History of Scottish Architecture*, Glendinning, MacKechnie and MacInnes proposed that Scotland underwent the 'fundamental change' between 1660 and 1760 - 'from a north-west European country preoccupied with religious and dynastic issues to a secular oriented society increasingly committed to world-wide British imperialism'.⁵ Viewing the century after 1660 through the prism of Sir William Bruce and the supposed triumph of classicism, it concluded that there was 'a full establishment in Scotland, for the first time, of a mainstream European classicism'.⁶ That 'imperial perspective' implies that a Unionist or British architecture emerged after 1707. Recent research by Charles Wemyss et al, has demonstrated just how little 'mainstream European classicism' penetrated Scotland before the 1760s; and a recent study of Jacobite architecture has revealed both that there was none, and how little 'unionist' architecture there was either. Fully until the 1760s, Scotland was constructing great houses in the Scottish baroque manner, one of whose

first exemplars was Glamis, begun in the 1660s.

A comparison with other countries shows that it is simply not credible to propose several centuries of consistent and unchanging architecture. One consequence of our fixation with the martial panoply of these chateaux de rêves - or 'dream castles' - is that we have failed to observe how they changed and evolved in line with regime change. So what follows is a very tentative set of suggestions for an alternative chronology for Scottish architecture, based fundamentally upon the combination of new research and a close examination of the building fabric from an architectural perspective.



Seton Palace

¹The principal document in which this view is set out is the 1752 *Proposals for carrying out Public Works in Edinburgh*. For more on this, see C McKean, 'A Scottish problem with Castles' in *Historical Research* 2005.

²See C McKean, XXXX *Architectural Heritage*

³This is the standing assumption in, for example, Glendinning, MacKechnie and MacInnes, *History of Scottish Architecture* (1996), and Glendinning and MacKechnie, *Scottish Architecture* (2004).

⁴Dr David Caldwell, Oxford Conference on the Mediaeval House, September 2010.

⁵M Glendinning, A MacKechnie, R MacInnes, *A History of Scottish Architecture*, 71. Edinburgh, (1996).

⁶*ibid*, 73.



Bog Home

An alternative reality: first steps toward a chronology

David I: c 1150 – 1190

The laying out of linear, unwall'd burghs unique in Europe, and the addition of L-plan family great towers to existing courts.

James I-III: mainly 1190 – 1290.

The tower changes and walls become thicker – up to 3m so that they can accommodate stairs and chambers within them. This is the period of the great geometric towers.

James IV: 1490 – 1513.

As the tower walls thin, they contain chambers and stairs within no longer. These are now expressed in separate structures – both extended from the tower and separately in the inner court. There is some Italian Renaissance influence.

James V: 1528 – 1542.

Considerable change- the arrival of the State Apartment in Stirling and Linlithgow. French influence in the *chatelets* of Falkland and Holyrood, but starkly Italian at the palace of Stirling, and the home of the royal architect Sir James Hamilton of Finnart at Craignethan and elsewhere.

Queen Mary 1538-1568.

Mary of Guise Queen Dowager, and then Queen Mary, Queen of France under whom Scotland was destined to become a French colony. Profound change from 1551, when the rectangularity of mediaeval Scots gives way to a Franco-Scots of *tours maitresse*, studies in the form of *tourelles* and a romantic metaphorically martial skyline. Begins with great houses – Strathbogie, Kirkwall and Balvenie in the 15650s, and spreads to lesser houses – particularly in the north-east – in the 1560s.

James VI: minority 1569 – 1589.

The influence of the Regent Morton. The de-Frenchifying of great seats (eg Drochil, Claypotts, Thirlestane etc) and the creation of a new 'Scottish architecture' reflective of *Scottish* mediaeval rather than *French* mediaeval nobility as in Dalkeith.

James VI: majority 1589 – 1625.

The architecture of Queen Anna's court – of the new men, *noblesse de la robe*, U-plan villas somewhat on the Danish model. Similarity of Linlithgow to one of the wings of the Kronborg. Anna's own cruciform house at Dunfermline.

The architecture of James VI:

The apogee of a revived Franco-Scots – in NE Scotland with the Bel family – taken to new heights, and new martial rhetorical flourishes (eg Bog, Craigievar etc).

Charles I: 1625 – 1637.

A new urban sobriety. Tolbooth, Tron Kirk, Glasgow University, Parliament House, Hutcheson's Hospital, and Palace at Edinburgh Castle. A residual flourish in the shires, but Chancellor Seton is dead and the king has become remote.

Civil War: 1537 – 1560.

Some new building, but more continuity than change – particularly in interiors.

Charles II: 1660 – 1684.

Begins a century of Scottish Baroque – beginning with Glamis in the 1660s, reaching its apogee with Drumlanrig – and lasting until Duff House (1748). The emergence of the 'Scots pediment'.

James VII: 1684 – 1688.

Too short a reign to make a big change. A continuation of Scottish baroque. But a certain regularisation - eg proposals for Traquair.

William

The *embourgeoisement* of Scots noble architecture: the application of spurious pediments to otherwise Scots great houses – eg Hamilton and Dalkeith. Classical architecture is left to the 'new men' - the *noblesse de la robe* like Sir William Bruce and his clique. Scottish baroque continues to evolve – eg Inveraray – until the reign of George III.

From the machair to Mykines – or making the invisible visible

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of Aberdeen) and Graeme
Whittington (School of Geography
and Geosciences, University of St.
Andrews)

Introduction

In the 1970s, Ian and Lekky Shepherd were excavating at Rosinish in the Western Isles (Shepherd & Tuckwell 1979). Their revelation of barley and emmer wheat cultivation during the early Bronze Age in Benbecula encouraged them to seek further environmental evidence in the vicinity of their site and areas beyond. Out of that beginning came pollen-based research which extends much further back into the prehistory of the Long Island and presaged methodologically a series of studies which have sought to fill lacunae in the material archaeological record.

Pollen analysis (or palynology) has the power to demonstrate the past patterns of vegetation in an area and, by inference, to illuminate the causes and types of vegetation change within the context of environmental and cultural history. Archaeology is an unpredictable affair - the known sites are generally a subset of what has survived, while unknown sites are unable to contribute to our reconstructions. Using examples drawn from the Outer Hebrides, Shetland and the Faroe Islands (Fig 1), and for three very different periods, this paper presents a snapshot of pollen-analytical and related findings from areas for which the archaeological data are, or have been, lacking to one degree or another.

The Western Isles machair

The sandy plains (machair) of the Atlantic seaboard are a distinctive feature of the Outer Hebrides. They developed as a result of shoreward movement of sediment following a rise in postglacial (Holocene) sea levels. During the period over which machair has formed, the earliest date proposed for its occupation was the Neolithic. The natural origins of the machair are not disputed, but examination of deposits at sites in the islands of Benbecula and Grimsay encouraged us (Whittington & Edwards 1997; Edwards *et al* 2005a) to advance a possible anthropogenic role in its development, and also to suggest that human involvement may date from the Mesolithic period (pre-ca 5730 cal BP), a time for which archaeological evidence was lacking from the Outer Hebrides, but for which palynological indications of human impact were frequent. The presence of charcoal might suggest that burning of the vegetation cover of the machair was an additional factor to the supposedly dominant marine and aeolian processes in sand mobility. Removal of shrub vegetation may also have left sand surfaces open to deflation.

Gregory *et al* (2005) subsequently reported an examination of eroding coastal dunes at the prehistoric site of Northton, Harris, which produced the first archaeological evidence of Mesolithic activity in the Western Isles in the form of two midden-related deposits.

Clickimin, Shetland

The Loch of Clickimin is well known for its broch and associated monuments of the Bronze and Iron Ages (Hamilton 1968; Fojut 1988). Pollen, diatom and sedimentological investigations (Edwards *et al* 2005b) revealed that the environs of the site experienced environmental change from Neolithic times onward with the reduction in the local vegetational cover of birch woodland. The broch-building period

witnessed a continuation of pre-existing pastoral husbandry for which heather burning may have exacerbated the natural spread of blanket peat. Initially, no evidence was adduced for local arable activity and this was thought to be consistent possibly with the low numbers of excavated querns and the absence of cereal macrofossil finds when compared with other Shetland broch sites. The application of 'rapid scanning' techniques, however, led to the discovery of a consistent cereal-type pollen representation from Bronze Age times onwards. There were discrepancies between the palaeoenvironmental evidence and the environmental and palaeoeconomic inferences made by the excavator of the site – but these are seen as positive outcomes for scientific progress.

Priestly cereals in the Faroe Islands?

In the 1970s, following encouragement from the Faroese state antiquarian Sverri Dahl, the Faroese palynologist Johannes Jóhansen (1979; 1986) investigated sites of potential early cultivation on the islands of Mykines and Streymoy. The Mykines site of Lambi, in particular, held a fascination because its intriguing field system was surmised to possibly represent a site stemming from the activities of pre-Viking Age Irish priests (*papar*). There are a number of such 'ancient field' systems in the Faroes and an increasing number of pre-Norse cereal pollen finds – but many of the sites are sub-optimal for palynological study.



Fig. 1: The location of the main island groups in the North Atlantic mentioned in the text.

High resolution and rapid scanning methodologies at Hov on the island of Suðuroy (Edwards & Borthwick 2010) push the possible cultivation of barley back several centuries prior to the conventional arrival of Norse settlers ca AD 800. The inferred farming activity was accompanied by soil erosion. It is impossible to say whether the landscape impacts adduced from the environmental investigations originated from Irish, Norse or other colonisers.

Conclusions

The work summarised here has sought to show that a healthy complementarity can exist between the environmental and the social-material arms of archaeological study, to the benefit of both (cf. Whittington & Edwards 1995; Edwards & Ralston 2003). The question of a disjuncture between lines of evidence which may eventually cross a threshold of believability – as challenges are translated from possibilities into probabilities – is part of the process of disciplinary advancement. This should provide a stimulus for future research if we are able to exercise patience and an open mind – qualities admirably and good-naturedly shown by Ian Shepherd.

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Rosinish, looking across to North Uist with the Beaker occupation area on the edge of the beach to the left of the picture



Rosinish 1974, the first season, looking south across the Beaker occupation area; Ian can be seen making the first clearance of the area to the right of centre.

Research by three biologist colleagues with Ian Shepherd

By Adam Watson, Alexander D Walker and Rodney E Heslop

Background to our study with Ian Shepherd

The research that eventually involved Ian Shepherd with us began in 1999. We three are retired biologists, Adam Watson (AW) a research ecologist, Alexander Walker (ADW) and Rodney Heslop (REH) soil surveyors. In 1999, botanist John Miles claimed that birches can change acidic podzol soils to fertile brown earths within a few decades. ADW was sceptical, for as a surveyor in upper Speyside and Moray he had found birch on both podzol and brown earth. We then looked at Miles' papers. Having

observed podzols under heather and brown earths under nearby birch-wood, he assumed that birch had colonised heather and changed the soil. He had not studied change at one site, and assumed that the difference between soils under heather and birch was a chrono-sequence in time. ADW thought it more likely represented an inherent difference in site quality. Also he had noticed on heather moorland that soils beside stone-clearance heaps differed from soils nearby. He took AW to see birch-woods near Grantown and moorland with clearance heaps on Knock of Braemoray. We decided to study both aspects and soon asked REH to join us.

The birch study was straightforward, and we have completed it. We studied many sites used by Miles and others, and many others where old maps or records showed long-established birch. At each site we dug soil pits to study the soil

Figure 1. From left, Sandy Walker, Ian Shepherd, Rodney Heslop and retired deerstalker John Robertson at a cultivated site in lower Glen Gairn, 4 August 2008. Photo Adam Watson.



profile (the different 'soil horizons' or layers exposed in a vertical cut) down to the 'parent material' (derived from underlying bedrock or glacial deposits). Also we studied vegetation and noted whether or not earthworms and molehills occurred. More than two decades before Miles began his study, Dimbleby had published (1951) the same claim that birch within a few decades can change podzol to brown earth

with earthworms, and Miles cited this (1985). Dimbleby had made the same assumption about a chrono-sequence, even though inherent site differences offered an alternative explanation. Dimbleby and later Miles set up experiments by planting birch into heather, realising that experiments involving a true chrono-sequence would provide a more reliable result. Dimbleby's experiments were studied many years later by John Satchell (1980). The soil under birch remained a clearly differentiated podzol and too acidic for earthworms. Hence he refuted Dimbleby's claim and the same claim later made by Miles. Our findings from many birch sites including all the Miles sites in northern Scotland are in agreement with Satchell.

In autumn 2004, ADW asked AW if he knew any sites with birch on flat freely drained soils beside heather in Strathspey, and AW mentioned Tulloch Moor. On visiting it, he noticed molehills on the heather and dark crumbly humus in the upper soil horizons. We inspected the site in June 2005, finding anthropogenic soil and vegetation. AW read of published work by Kevin Edwards at Braeroddach and Piers Dixon at Pitcarmick. In



Figure 2. The group examining a soil profile

2005 at Braeroddach we found anthropogenic soil and vegetation, near stone-clearance heaps and other features of early human activity.

Ian Shepherd's contribution to our study

This was when we thought we should consult archaeologists. AW phoned Kevin Edwards of Aberdeen University and Piers Dixon of the Royal Commission (RCAHMS), who sent photocopies of relevant publications. Kevin Edwards told AW that Ian Shepherd knew much about archaeology in Deeside and suggested that AW contact him. In 2006, AW did so and received an enthusiastic response.

Despite his peripatetic moves, he listened to AW and gave unstinted enthusiasm. He offered to meet us in the field during summer 2007. By now the three of us had studied several sites with anthropogenic soils on heather moorland and a few in pine-wood.

Ian picked AW up at Crathes and then REH, to meet ADW on the Strone near Crathie. We showed him our methods and explained our reasoning. Deeply interested, he said he had enjoyed the trip and was keen to cooperate

further. On the way back, AW told him we were satisfied that our birch study would make a worthwhile published contribution. We thought our study of anthropogenic soils on moorland and woodland would be useful for biologists, but did not know enough about archaeology to be sure whether it would be of value for archaeologists. Ian assured AW and later all of us that we were doing something new and exciting. He thought we could give practical advice for archaeologists in the field, as an aid to further their own work.

Thus began the first of many trips including two days at Pitcarmick, where Piers Dixon joined us for a day. We went to sites found by AW at Morrone, Glen Girnock, Glen Tanar, lower Glen Gairn and broad-rig at Midmar, to one suggested by REH in old pinewood at Abernethy, and a varied set suggested by Ian with cord-rig sites at Ordie and Deskry, broad-rig at Midmar and Aboyne golf-course, and others at Kinord, Tarfside in Glen Esk, Crathie Burn, and Water of Aven in October 2008. We became a good team with many critical discussions and advanced our thinking. With the agreement of ADW and REH, AW asked him to be an author. He replied that he felt honoured, which AW thought typified his modesty. There was no doubt in the minds of the original trio of us that he had illuminated our thinking and expertise beyond measure. Also he was tireless in sending archaeological papers that he considered relevant, and we found his immense experience about other archaeological research and researchers to be of great value. With increased interest and awareness of the subject, AW was beginning to send him relevant papers that were being published in the ecological literature, especially in the publications of the Ecological Society of America.

By the end of 2008 we all agreed that we had studied enough sites to make a worth-while contribution. AW planned one more for summer 2009, to moorland by the Findhorn, where Scottish Natural Heritage had designated an

EU Special Area of Conservation because of the vegetation, and where a glance at large-scale Ordnance Survey maps showed field systems and hut circles. We expected yet another anthropogenic soil. By then he had stopped driving, but he said he would come in the bus to my house, all set for the trip to the Findhorn. Sadly, it was not to be, for we were shocked to hear of Ian's illness and later death.

Our study has lasted 11 years, but Ian was so illuminating for us that our work with him seems to have lasted most of this time. Only when AW checked our notes did he realise that our association in the field with Ian lasted an all too brief year and a half. We felt a bit lost without him as an expert field colleague and as steersman and author into the archaeological literature. We could write many extra words, but have reached the limit set for us. Let a photograph tell some more of this outstanding man as we remember him in the field. Another, taken by him, illustrates our fieldwork on a site that he suggested to us. He was a great Ian.

Since then, we cannot praise Moira Greig enough. She has given us help to find another archaeological colleague to join us, now Ian Ralston, and came out to meet AW and then into the field herself to meet all three of us, see what we do and suggest new sites.

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Additional Contribution

The Hillforts of Strathdon: 2004-2010

Murray Cook

Having worked across Scotland and Northern England for the last 15 years I can say without hesitation that projects with Ian in Aberdeenshire always filled me with joy and renewed my passion and enthusiasm for archaeology: without him this project would not have taken place.

Introduction

In 'In the Shadow of Bennachie' the RCAHMS survey of the Strathdon area, the hillforts (throughout the paper 'hillfort' is used as shorthand to describe an enclosure whether on a hill or not) of the area were classified into a six-fold scheme, according to size and defensive system recorded (RCAHMS 2007, 100-1). Of course, the information was gathered through non-invasive survey, and it is unclear how these classes related to each other, as their dates were unknown. Using the same criteria of size and defensive system, albeit with a larger data set Ralston (*et al* 1983) proposed a different classification as did Feachem a generation earlier (1966). These conflicting classifications illustrate the essentially limited value of such attempts: without hard data they remain talking points to be reinterpreted once a generation. In order to further the debate - hard dating evidence from physical excavation is needed.

In what some have described as naïve, The Hillforts of Strathdon Project was set up in an attempt to characterise and date the type-sites of the area, through a programme of key-hole excavation on the variety of enclosures in the area. After six seasons of excavations on nine enclosures with local volunteers and students, this paper briefly summarises the key results in chronological order and the general conclusions.

Results

Hill of Newleslie (NJ52NE 31; NJ 584 254) comprises a bank and internal quarry ditch surrounding the hilltop. The earthen bank measures between 4m and 5m wide, and is 0.5m high. The internal quarry ditch is between 3m and 4m wide and 0.4m deep. The fort measures 359m E-W by 175m transversely. Excavation across the ditch and bank revealed no subsurface features or substance to the bank and the defences are interpreted as representing either the remains of a palisade or an unfinished hillfort. It is argued that the site may be a hilltop enclosure of Late Bronze Age date (Cook *et al* 2009).

Bruce's Camp (NJ71NE 3, NJ 7685 1900), comprises a vitrified hillfort c 2.7 ha in extent, with a single stone bank measuring 2.65m by 0.95m. The entrance lies to the north-west, where there are two outer walls, one built from robbed material from the vitrified inner wall (Cook *et al* forthcoming). Two radiocarbon dates were obtained, the first from the base of the collapsed inner rampart, 2345±35 BP (SUERC-12307); and the second from a burnt *in situ* timber post of 2280±35 BP (SUERC-12306). Calibrated to two sigma the dates give ranges of 540-360 BC and 410-340 BC. In addition, a Romano-British crucible was recovered from the interior (*pers comm* Fraser Hunter).

Hill of Barra (NJ82NW 4, NJ 8025 2570), comprises a hillfort with three banks, the inner bank blocks an entrance in the outer two banks. Overall the interior measures 122m by 95m. The inner bank is made of stone and measures 2.3m wide and 0.80m high, and is associated with a ditch, measuring at least 0.95m and 0.7m wide, the middle bank comprises a soil dump and measures 0.23m high and 1.54m wide. The outer bank is made of stone and has two construction phases and measures 1.75m wide and up to 0.65m high (Cook *et al* 2009). A date of 2405±35 BP (SUERC-28730) was recovered from the fill of the ditch associated with the inner enclosure, which when calibrated to two sigma gives a date

of 560-360 BC. The outer enclosures therefore predate 560-360 cal BC.

Dunnideer (NJ62NW1, NJ 6530 6360), comprises a multi-vallate hillfort with an oblong vitrified gateless enclosure at its core. This measures 67m by 27m and the rampart survived to c 4m wide and 1.2m high (Cook forthcoming). Two dates were obtained from the base of the collapsed rampart: 2180 ± 30 BP (SUERC-22161) and 2210±35 (SUERC-28730). Calibrated to two sigma these date to of 370-160 BC and 390-190 BC respectively.

Suttie (NJ81NW38.2, NJ 8133 1580), comprises a 42m diameter cropmark enclosure, the ditch measured 4.6 m wide and up to 0.7 m deep. A secondary fill within the ditch's fill was a thin charcoal deposit from which a 2 sigma date of 370-90 BC (2160±40 bp) (SUERC-12918) was obtained from a piece of alder charcoal (Cook *et al* forthcoming). There was no trace of the recorded internal palisade.

Wester Fintray (NJ81NW53, NJ 80886 15767), comprises a cropmark enclosure measuring c 25 to 35m in diameter. The ditch measured 1.5 m wide by 0.8 m deep. A 2 sigma date of 320-200 BC (2275±40 bp) (SUERC-12916) was recovered from a piece of alder charcoal from the fill of a potential recut (Cook *et al* forthcoming).

Hill of Barra refortification (NMRS NJ82NW4, NJ 8025 2570), between the two outer banks dated to before 560 cal BC, lay a ditch measuring 1.50m wide and 0.87m deep. Assuming that this ditch circles the whole of the site it probably measured 135m wide by 140m long. A date of 1615±35 BP (SUERC-28728) was recovered from the primary fill of the ditch, calibrated to two sigma gives a date of AD 380-580 (Cook *et al* 2009).

Maiden Castle (NJ62SE2, NJ 6942 2435) comprises an outer bivallate enclosure measuring at maximum 40m E-W and 35m N-S; within the enclosure lay a circular thick-walled enclosure up to 20m in diameter. The outer ditch measured 3mm wide and 0.75m deep, the outer bank measured 4m wide by 1.6m high. The inner ditch

measured 2.2m wide and 1.1m deep and the inner bank measured 2m wide and 1.5m high. The inner stone built enclosure measured 2.25m wide and 1m high. Three radiocarbon dates were obtained from Maiden Castle from below and above the inner bank and under the inner stone walled enclosure: 1500 ± 30 BP (SUERC-22160), 1495±40 BP (SUERC-15909) and 1540±40 BP (SUERC-15908). Calibrated to two sigma they respectively date to AD 530-640, AD 500-650 and AD 420-610 (Cook *et al* 2008).

Significantly, Maiden Castle is the same size and shape as the Barflat enclosure (NJ42NE54, NJ 4970 2635) and thus may be roughly contemporary. Barflat is associated with the Rhynie cluster of eight Pictish symbol stones (RCAHMS 2008, 119-21). Perhaps, the stones were made on site or in memory of someone connected with Barflat.

Cairnmore (NJ 5035 2494, NJ52SW 9) comprises an oval trivalate enclosure, the outer outer enclosure comprises a soil bank and ditch, the middle a substantial stone wall and the inner a smaller stone built wall. All three defences are probably sequential but contemporary and while there are no radiocarbon dates yet, two brooch moulds and pin mould recovered from the foundation cut of the middle rampart are likely to be Early Historic in origin (Cook *et al* 2010).

Conclusion

As space is limited key conclusions will be made and not expanded upon.

Comparison with other regions suggest that hillforts in the North-east are rare (Armit & Ralston 1997, 181), suggesting their appearance may coincide with cultural 'high-tide marks' of their distribution in Britain, if this is the case what do their absences mean for other regions? Placed in a national context this potentially gives Aberdeenshire examples a wider significance.

The evidence indicates three periods of enclosure ranging between the Late Bronze Age (c 1000 BC), the Middle Iron Age (c 500 to 200 BC) and the Early Historic period (c AD 400 to

800), with the bulk of the evidence deriving from the latter two periods. While the more cynical archaeologist would suggest that we knew as much without excavation, the intrusive work has resulted in important fresh information being recovered.

Of particular interest is that the wide variety of enclosure forms present in the Middle Iron Age, all of which are associated with previously occupied sites, terminates with the construction and subsequent destruction of the oblong gateless forts at around c 200BC. In turn this coincides with the dramatic shift in unenclosed settlement patterns observed at Kintore, where c 1600 years of continuous roundhouse settlement was abandoned at around c 200 BC (Cook & Dunbar 2008). Clearly this period marks a significant social upheaval in the area.

Perhaps more significant is that without excavation none of the Early Historic enclosures could have been recognised as being Pictish, a pattern identified elsewhere in Britain (Newman & Brennand 1997, 74). This work, if extrapolated to the various other small enclosures and stone structures across Strathdon reveals a complex pattern of previously unknown Pictish settlement. For example, three of the sites, Cairnmore, Wheedlemont (NJ42HE 5; NJ 4729 2604) and Barflat are all within 3km of each other. All of them are slightly different, Cairnmore is the biggest and is associated with metal working, Barflat with Pictish symbol stones and Wheedlemont has clear evidence for circular structures within its interior. How do they all relate to each other and to the Rhynie Man that Ian and Lekky published in 1978 (Shepherd & Shepherd 1978)?

In conclusion, one almost feels that everything in Aberdeenshire starts and ends with Ian and while he will be missed his legacy will continue in the various strands of work he inspired.

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Excavations at Dunnideer Hillfort



Hillforts of Strathdon Project Team

